

# VCU Shafer Court Connections

THE MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY > Fall 2007

## BUILDING GREEN

A surge in the demand for sustainable building products finds VCU alumni ahead of the curve

V i r g i n i a   C o m m o n w e a l t h   U n i v e r s i t y



CIRCA

## Student housing: 2007

Once considered a commuter school, today Virginia Commonwealth University offers an attractive and vibrant residential campus environment, with housing for more than 4,700 students. One of 16 residence halls located on VCU's two campuses, Brandt Hall houses freshmen in suite-style living. Built in 2005, the 17-story building shares a common entrance with Rhoads Hall and supplies students with furnished, Internet-ready rooms, a computer lab, TV lounge and 24/7 security.



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Before being eco-friendly became trendy, Virginia Commonwealth University alumni were already designing and building with the environment in mind.

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# VCUAA president tackles growth plan

"Increasing the influence and impact of our alumni in support of students, faculty and the broader community is important," shares **Dan Massey** (B.S. '92/B), newly elected president of the Virginia Commonwealth University Alumni Association. With alumni membership growth and retention key to meeting these objectives, Massey plans to build upon the great past work of the alumni association and harness the excitement and energy that is much a part of the university's tradition.

Massey brings an infectious enthusiasm and sense of order to his board leadership that reflects his keen business sense, rooted in VCU undergraduate training that led to a degree in business and his current role as senior vice president at SunTrust Mortgage. Managing implementations of new business processes and systems for a rapidly growing, top 10 mortgage company is no small task. Yet it is all in a day's work for Massey whose way is all business.

Throughout more than 10 years in business, Massey has held a variety of marketing and technology customer-centered positions at SunTrust. He is a graduate of the Mortgage Bankers Association's Future Leaders Program and School of Mortgage Banking.

Massey kicked off his presidency of the 28-member alumni board with a summer planning session. The PowerPoint presentation, newsprint covering the walls, felt-tip pens, Post-it notes and brainstorming sessions brought a synergy and a sense of movement. Massey exudes a teaming spirit, key to the university building on its ranking as one of the nation's foremost academic institutions.



## VCU Shafer Court Connections

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Contributions of articles, photos and artwork are welcome; however, Shafer Court Connections accepts no responsibility for unsolicited items.

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## Postmarks: comments and opinions from VCU alumni and friends

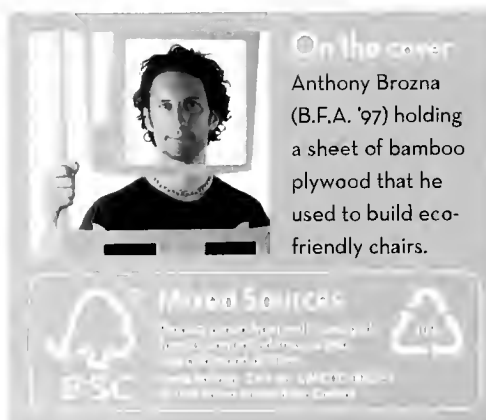
**Job well done.** I just received your redesigned alumni magazine and think it looks fabulous. I am happy to see that you have taken advantage of some of your gifted designers up there at VCU. Please send my congratulations to the staff and make sure they enter the CASE Awards for publication redesign and magazine improvement. You should be very proud of the job they have done. It definitely made me stop and take a closer look.

*Melissa V. Pinard, editor, William and Marv Alumni Magazine*

**Editor's note:** Shafer Court Connections won regional recognition from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. The magazine's redesign earned an Award of Excellence in the District III 2006 competition in the "Magazine Publishing Improvement" category. Entries were judged on content, writing, editing, design, photography, printing and use of resources.

**Field hockey fan.** I just received my fall addition of Shafer Court Connections in the mail. As a former assistant field hockey coach and assistant athletic director at VCU, I enjoyed seeing the field hockey photos.

*Bridget E. Lyons, Ph.D. (M.Ed. '91; Ph.D. '04/E), Miami Shores, Fla.*





# University news

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## Unpublished Plath poem appears in Blackbird

"Ennui," a previously unpublished poem by the late Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Sylvia Plath, appeared in *Blackbird*, one of the nation's leading online literary journals.

*Blackbird*, which can be found at [www.blackbird.vcu.edu](http://www.blackbird.vcu.edu), is published through a partnership between VCU's Department of English and New Virginia Review Inc.

Anna Journey, contributing editor of *Blackbird* and a student in the M.F.A. in Creative Writing program at VCU, discovered the unpublished status of "Ennui" during research in the archives at Indiana University's Lilly Library. Plath wrote "Ennui," a sonnet, while an undergraduate at Smith College.

Last fall, *Blackbird* photographically reproduced the original typed manuscripts of "Ennui," which reveals the important and enduring influence of F. Scott Fitzgerald on Plath's writing. "Ennui" was Plath's creative response to Fitzgerald's novels "The Great Gatsby" and "Tender is the Night." Echoes of those works appeared in poems throughout Plath's life, including such well-known later works as "Daddy."



## Giving boosts business, engineering

The schools of Business and Engineering have received several gifts that will provide support for advanced education, professorships, scholarships and the construction of a new School of Business and expansion of the School of Engineering.

Dominion, one of the top energy producers in the U.S., pledged \$1.5 million to the two schools, and Qimonda, a leading global supplier of DRAM products, gave \$2 million to the School of Engineering. In addition, Richmond businessman Sam Kornblau, chairman of SAMCO Development Corp., gave \$2.5 million to the School of Business to establish a real estate institute in the school.

## Professor earns Pulitzer recognition

David Wojahn, professor of English and director of VCU's Creative Writing Program, was named a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry for "Interrogation Palace: New and Selected Poems, 1982-2005," a career-spanning volume published last year. The 91st annual Pulitzer Prizes in Journalism, Letters, Drama and Music were announced in April.

Eight-time Grand Slam winner Andre Agassi and his wife, tennis hall-of-famer Steffi Graf, as well as three-time Grand Slam champ Lindsay Davenport and the world's No. 4-ranked player James Blake, attended the December 2006 groundbreaking for the Mary and Frances Youth Center at the corner of Linden and Cary streets on VCU's Monroe Park Campus.

The center is being funded by a private, \$1.5 million donation from Michael Fraizer, chairman and CEO of Genworth Financial Inc., and his wife, Elizabeth. The youth center will provide at-risk children in the Richmond community with a wide range of life skills, mentoring, academic and athletic programs, including Lobs & Lessons, an after-school tennis program.



In April, VCU dedicated a new \$17 million, four-story School of Nursing building that includes a clinical learning center with patient simulators in critical and primary care rooms, research laboratories, a community outreach nursing center, faculty offices and a heritage room. An added feature of the building is a donation of more than 100 watercolors by **W. Baxter Perkinson Jr.** (D.D.S. '70), VCU alumnus and former rector of the VCU Board of Visitors.

At the dedication VCU announced alumni donations totaling \$4.75 million had been made to the schools of Nursing, Medicine and Allied Health Professions.



## VCUHS makes 'Best Hospital' list

The VCU Health System is one of 173 medical centers nationwide — and the only one in Central Virginia — to be named in U.S. News & World Report's 2007 rankings of America's Best Hospitals. The annual survey evaluated nearly 5,500 hospitals, with fewer than 200 meeting the standard in one or more areas. In particular, the VCU Health System was noted for excellence in treating patients with kidney disease, ranking 42nd in the country.

## AAFS accredits forensic science

The American Academy of Forensic Sciences has awarded full, five-year accreditation to VCU's Bachelor of Science in Forensic Science. VCU now offers one of just two programs in the U.S. that are accredited at both the graduate and undergraduate level.

## Annual convocation honors faculty

The university recognized four distinguished professors for outstanding accomplishments in the areas of teaching, scholarship, service and overall excellence at the Faculty Address and Convocation Sept. 25. This year's honorees were:

- Distinguished Service Award: **Aradhana "Bela" Sood, M.D.** (M.S.H.A. '06), professor and chair, Division of Child Psychiatry, School of Medicine.
- Distinguished Scholarship Award: **Sarah Spiegel, Ph.D.**, professor and chair, Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, School of Medicine.
- Distinguished Teaching Award: **Faye Belgrave, Ph.D.**, professor, Department of Psychology, College of Humanities and Sciences.
- University Award of Excellence: **Marcel Cornis-Pope, Ph.D.**, director, Ph.D. in Media, Art, and Text, College of Humanities and Sciences, and professor, Department of English.

## Grant advances science and math

VCU was selected as one of 31 U.S. biomedical research institutions to receive a grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute to advance access to science for pre-college students and teachers.

VCU plans to use the grant of \$750,000 over five years to develop programs to increase math and science literacy for students in Central Virginia, enhance research and life sciences training for K-12 science teachers and expand Internet-based life sciences videos and lessons to teachers and students nationwide.

## Grad earns Fulbright Scholarship

**Hanan Adeeb Abed** (B.S. '04/H&S; M.S.W. '07) has been selected to receive a Fulbright Student Scholarship. Abed traveled in September to Zayed University where she will spend 10 months studying the perspectives university-aged women have of their roles in the United Arab Emirates. Abed is the third VCU student to receive a Fulbright Scholarship in the past two years.



## Administrative changes

Thomas G. Rosenthal, a Richmond business executive, was elected rector of the VCU Board of Visitors. ... Gov. Timothy Kaine appointed Maurice Jones, vice president and general manager of The Virginian-Pilot, to the Board of Visitors. ... Beverly J. Warren, Ed.D., Ph.D., was appointed dean of the VCU School of Education. ... Allyson Vanstone has been appointed dean to the VCU School of the Arts in Qatar. ... Deborah Davis, former president of Pitt County Memorial Hospital, in Greenville, N.C., assumed the role of chief operating officer at MCV Hospitals, part of the VCU Health System.

## Professor joins elite advising group

Puru Jena, Ph.D., VCU distinguished professor of physics, is one of nine tenured, research-active scientists and engineers selected nationwide as a 2007 Jefferson Science Fellow at the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C. Fellows advise and educate policy officials, including the secretary of state, of complex, scientific issues and their potential impact on U.S. foreign policy and international relations. Following a one-year term, Jena will return to VCU, but remain available for five years to the U.S. government as an expert consultant.

## Theater teaches docs empathy skills

Doctors taught empathy techniques by theater professors show improved bedside manner, according to a pilot study by VCU researchers. The findings may help in the development of medical curriculum for clinical empathy training. Results of the study, conducted by faculty members from the departments of Theatre and Internal Medicine, indicate a significant improvement in the clinical empathy skills of internal medicine residents at the VCU Medical Center following six hours of instruction with professors of theater.

## Student earns Goldwater Scholarship

VCU student Elizabeth K. Proffitt, a biomedical engineering and biochemistry major, was one of 317 undergraduates from across the country to be named a Goldwater Scholar for the 2007-08 academic year.

Goldwater Scholars are selected on the basis of academic merit from a field of 1,110 mathematics, science and engineering students. The one- and two-year scholarships cover the cost of tuition, fees, books, and room and board up to a maximum of \$7,500 per year.

## Adcenter team wins national award

In May, a VCU Adcenter team won the Cadillac National Case Study Competition, an annual contest that featured 70 schools and 1,200 students this year. Graduate students Joe Quattrone (B.S. '05/MC), Katherine Capocelli (B.S. '06/MC), Zoe Bell, Slate Donaldson and Carmen Velazquez defeated a team from the University of New Mexico's Anderson School of Management, which had produced the competition's winning team the previous two years.



Donald Abraham, Ph.D.

## Methods offer therapy for sickle cell disease

Working under a grant from the National Institutes of Health, Donald Abraham, Ph.D., the Alfred and Frances Burger Professor of Biological and Medicinal Chemistry, in the Department of Medicinal Chemistry in VCU's School of Pharmacy, led a research team to show that 5-HMF, a pure compound developed by the team, allows sickle cells to move smoothly throughout the blood vessels and prevent blockages. This unique anti-sickling agent holds promise for treating sickle cell disease, a painful and debilitating genetic blood disorder affecting nearly 80,000 Americans.

## Compounds show promise as building blocks for new forms of energy

Researchers have discovered a new class of aluminum-hydrogen complexes that exhibits unique chemistry and may one day be used as basic building blocks to create materials for use in alternative forms of energy and high-energetic materials. The research, headed jointly by Puru Jena, Ph.D., distinguished professor of physics, and Boggavarapu Kiran, Ph.D., assistant professor of physics, both at VCU, and Kit H. Bowen, Ph.D., professor of chemistry at Johns Hopkins University, was supported by the U.S. Air Force Office of Scientific Research and the Department of Energy.

## Scientists decode genome of oral pathogen

VCU researchers, with support from the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease, have decoded the genome of a bacteria normally present in the healthy human mouth that can cause a deadly heart infection if it enters the bloodstream.

The finding enables scientists to better understand the organism, *Streptococcus sanguinis*, and develop new strategies for treatment and infection prevention.

The study was conducted by Francis Macrina, Ph.D., VCU's vice president for research, and Gregory A. Buck, Ph.D., director of the Center for the Study of Biological Complexity at VCU in collaboration with other VCU researchers.



## Massey researchers develop innovative treatments for fighting leukemia

In the past year, research teams at VCU Massey Cancer Center, led by Steven Grant, M.D., associate director for translational research and co-leader of the center's Cancer Cell Biology Program, have identified several possible treatments for leukemia. One study unearthed a new approach to enhance the activity of a new anti-cancer agent to the treatment of chronic myelogenous leukemia, a form of bone marrow cancer.

Massey researchers also presented preclinical research at the American Association of Cancer Research's annual meeting suggesting the potential of a new combination treatment for chronic lymphocytic leukemia, and conducted a study to improve the anti-leukemic activity of an agent that triggers programmed cell death.

These research efforts were supported by grants from the National Institutes of Health, the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of America and the Department of Defense.

While the men's basketball team's record-breaking 2006-07 season made VCU a household name, last year the Rams racked up wins and conference recognition across the board.

- The men's basketball team defeated George Mason University 65-59 to earn the Colonial Athletic Association Championship and upset Duke University 79-77 in the first round of the NCAA Tournament.
- Men's basketball coach Anthony Grant was named CAA Coach of the Year.
- The baseball team captured its third CAA Championship in five seasons.
- Seniors James Frierson and Davion Lambert earned Most Outstanding Performers for track events and field events, respectively, at the CAA Championship. The men's track and field team finished third overall in the tournament.
- VCU head tennis coach Paul Kostin was named 2006 Mid-Atlantic College Coach of the Year by the U.S. Professional Tennis Association.
- Women's tennis finished with a school-record 29-1 season and an appearance at the NCAA Sweet 16.
- Men's tennis earned its 10th CAA title in 11 years and made its 14th consecutive NCAA Tournament bid.



## VCU strengthens campus security

To help keep the university community safer and more secure and to deal with potential threats, VCU has implemented a rapid, multi-level system for communicating emergency information to students, employees, parents and neighbors. Communication channels include text messages, warning sirens on both campuses, digital signs in major academic buildings and in all residence halls, computer desktop messages, e-mails and the VCU Alert Web site at [www.alert.vcu.edu](http://www.alert.vcu.edu).

"Providing a safe environment on our campuses to learn, study, teach, work and participate in university activities has been and remains a top priority," says VCU President Eugene P. Trani, Ph.D. "The April 16 tragedy at Virginia Tech led us to re-examine everything we do in this area and to look for ways to strengthen our already strong campus security practices."

The emergency communications channels can be used together or in any combination to effectively respond to specific emergency situations.

## Dental school receives \$2.5 million

VCU alumnus and former VCU Rector W. Baxter Perkinson Jr. (D.D.S. '70) donated \$2.5 million to the School of Dentistry in October 2006 — the largest gift in the dental school's 113-year history. The gift will be used to advance the school's clinics, labs and technology as well as to recruit top faculty and students. In honor of the gift and his years of service to the school and the university, the VCU Board of Visitors voted to name a new dental school building in Perkinson's honor. The new, 55,000-square-foot, four-story building on Leigh Street will connect the existing Lyons Dental and Wood Memorial buildings.

## Rice Center gifts support education

Inger Rice has pledged \$2 million for the construction of an education outreach building at VCU's Inger and Walter Rice Center for Environmental Life Sciences. The Rice Center also received a \$25,000 gift from the Dominion Foundation to help fund an education pavilion, and a \$100,000 gift from Alcoa Foundation to enhance the center's summer education program for K-12 teachers.

## VCU celebrates Fenn's career

VCU celebrated the 90th birthday of John B. Fenn, Ph.D., 2002 Nobel Prize winner and VCU chemistry professor, with a symposium in his honor on June 15. Participants at the all-day event addressed developments in chemistry and mass spectrometry, an analytical technique used to identify, quantify and explain unknown compounds. Fenn was awarded the Nobel Prize for his work in this area.

VCU is establishing the John Fenn Chair Professorship in Chemistry in recognition of his research contributions.



President Eugene P. Trani, Ph.D., congratulates VCU alumnus John B. Fenn, Ph.D.

## Grant supports disability research

The VCU Department of Rehabilitation Counseling in the School of Allied Health Professions has received a \$4.25 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education's National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research. The grant will be used to create the national Coordination, Outreach and Research Center, led by VCU professor and principal investigator Brian T. McMahon, Ph.D.

## New programs

Bachelor of Arts in Film  
Master of Arts in Homeland Security  
and Emergency Preparedness  
Master of Science in Athletic Training  
Doctor of Nurse Anesthesia Practice



## VCU community initiatives rank high

VCU's efforts to foster university-community partnerships have been lauded nationally. VCU was recognized by the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for its outstanding efforts in community engagement. The university also received recognition from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching for its community initiatives, and was one of 62 higher learning institutions nationwide that demonstrated a commitment to community engagement in the classroom and beyond the boundaries of campus.

## Literacy Institute wins DOE grant

The Literacy Institute, a partnership among the Virginia Literacy Foundation, the VCU School of Education and the VCU Center for Public Policy, has been awarded a \$4.4 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to boost language and early literacy skills of young children.

VCU competed nationally for the Early Reading First grant and received one of only 32 grants. The new grant-funded project — Partnership for Excellence in Early Language and Literacy Skills — will work with Richmond Public Schools to strengthen the early literacy component of the Head Start and Virginia Preschool Initiative programs.

VCU's graduate schools are among the best in the nation, according to the latest survey by U.S. News and World Report of "America's Best Graduate Schools."

|                           |      |
|---------------------------|------|
| Nurse Anesthesia          | 1st  |
| Health Care Management    | 4th  |
| School of the Arts        | 6th  |
| Sculpture                 | 1st  |
| Graphic Design            | 4th  |
| Painting and Drawing      | 10th |
| Rehabilitation Counseling | 13th |
| School of Social Work     | 14th |
| Women's Health            | 18th |
| School of Nursing         | 47th |
| School of Education       | 49th |

## Engineering discovery advances how computers and electronics work

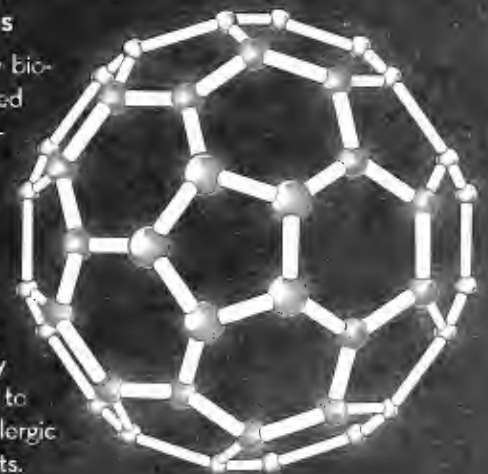
A research team of electrical and computer engineers from VCU's School of Engineering and the University of Cincinnati has made an important discovery in the emerging field of "spintronics" that may one day usher in a new generation of smaller, smarter, faster computers, sensors and other devices. Spintronics research focuses on using the "spin" of an electron for storing, processing and communicating information. With support from the U.S. Air Force Office of Scientific Research and the National Science Foundation, the VCU-UC team was the first to study spin-relaxation time in organic nanostructures and found that it can be exceptionally long, making them the ideal host materials for spintronic devices. Organic materials are also inexpensive, and therefore very desirable for making electronic devices.

## Research team uncovers a new drug action to treat multiple sclerosis

Led by Sarah Spiegel, Ph.D., professor and chair in the VCU Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, and with grants from the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation, a team of VCU researchers identified a unique mechanism of action of a new drug that shows great promise for treating multiple sclerosis. The team found that Fingolimod inhibits the activity of a key enzyme necessary for producing inflammatory mediators that drive disorders such as asthma and MS.

## Buckyballs found to fight allergies

A research team has identified a new biological function for a soccer ball-shaped nanoparticle called a buckyball — the ability to block allergic response, setting the stage for the development of new therapies for allergic disease. Researchers from VCU and Luna Innovations Inc., a private research company in Roanoke, Va., with grant support from the National Institutes of Health and the Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network, are the first to show that buckyballs are able to block allergic response in human cell culture experiments.



## VCU researchers consider current treatment a cure for hepatitis C

Researchers with the VCU Medical Center say that the use of hepatitis C treatment drugs now points to a cure for the estimated 4.1 million Americans infected with the disease — the leading cause of cirrhosis, liver cancer and the need for liver transplants.

Up to seven years following treatment, 99 percent of the 277 patients with HCV who were treated successfully with peginterferon alone, or in combination with ribavirin, had no detectable virus. The remaining eight patients had no consistent traits and it was not determined if they experienced a relapse or were re-infected. These results validate the use of the word "cure," which is defined as having undetectable HCV in the blood six months after treatment.

"We at VCU are encouraged by this data because it is rare in the treatment of life-threatening viral diseases that we can tell patients they may be cured," says Mitchell Schiffman, M.D., professor in the VCU School of Medicine and chief of hepatology and medical director of the Liver Transplant Program at VCU Medical Center.

# BUILDing GREEN



by erin egan

VCU alumni commit  
to environmentally friendly design



Anthony Brozna  
of ECO Supply Center

**Blame it on Al Gore.** You can't turn on the TV, read a newspaper or listen to a presidential candidate without hearing someone mention the phrase "going green." The movement to clean up the planet is not new but it has gained considerable momentum in the past 10 years. The trend that once appealed to a select few crunchy granola types now reaches the masses. Major corporations such as GM, Dow Chemical, DuPont and Owens Corning have chief sustainability officers to aid them in pursuing environmentally conscious practices. Big-box retailers like Target, Home Depot and Wal-Mart have begun marketing to the green consumer.

The related phenomenon of green building also has grown steadily in recent years into a veritable business of its own. A decade ago, the industry's worth was negligible. In 2005, the annual U.S. market in sustainable building products and services was more than \$7 billion and is expected to increase to \$12 billion for 2007.

Those numbers support the mission of the U.S. Green Building Council, which was founded in 1993. The council is the nation's leading nonprofit composed of corporations, builders, universities, government agencies and nonprofit organizations working together to change the way buildings are designed, built and operated. When the council's voluntary Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design rating system took effect for commercial buildings in 2000, the council had 38 certified projects. Today, there are 889 LEED-certified projects and more than 6,000 registered projects around the world.

## Exploring a better building model

LEED offers solutions for architects, builders, developers and others in the industry so that they can construct the greenest buildings possible. Among the strategies emphasized are sustainable site development, water conservation, energy efficiency, selection of materials and indoor environmental quality. The LEED rating system — certified, silver, gold and platinum — awards points for the number of these strategies implemented for each project. The more points tallied, the higher a building is rated.

Currently 197 buildings in the state of Virginia are registered under the LEED program — 17 in Richmond and seven associated with Virginia Commonwealth University.

The council expects even more growth in the next five years, particularly in the area of residential building. The council began a pilot test of LEED for homes in August 2005. About 375 builders representing 6,000 homes across the

U.S. participated in the pilot program, and 201 homes have been LEED certified. The pilot test concludes in fall 2007 and the council will launch the LEED for Homes rating system at that time. Once the rating system takes effect, expect construction of green homes to become the norm.

"People are becoming more concerned about the planet and how we treat it," says Ashley Katz, communications coordinator at the council. "Building green is an immediate and immeasurable way to make a difference."

## Leading the movement

Many VCU alumni are taking the lead in environmentally conscious building. **Anthony Brozna** (B.F.A. '97) is a furniture designer and craftsman who owns not one, but two, eco-friendly businesses in Richmond, Va. Brozna Woodworking, in business since 2000, showcases the artist's furniture designs using lumber from trees felled by storms or sickness, salvaged from old buildings or engineered using rapidly sustainable materials such as bamboo or sorghum. ECO Supply Center specializes in the

distribution of green materials for commercial and residential interiors and is one of the few suppliers on the East Coast. It opened in 2005.

Brozna has always worked with salvaged materials. "There's so much wood in the world that's already available," he says. "So I coupled that with natural wax and oil finishes. That was before there was any sort of talk about green building. It just made the most sense."

Talking with Brozna, his passion for green becomes quickly evident. He sees it not as a trend but a time of progressive ideas, similar to what was happening in this country during World War II when there was a need to produce new materials.

"You hear green and it's an easy way to publicize [the idea]," he says, "but I feel like what's happening is another period of innovation that reflects social, economic and environmental issues that are really important and need to be addressed."

Brozna points out the chair he's perched on as an example of what he means. It looks as though it's made of some sort of plastic but it's not. "This chair is made from paper stock. Here's a perfect example of that innovative new material," he says. "All of a sudden you have a whole new material to design with."

## Did you know?

Bamboo can grow 60 feet in 59 days. A full bamboo crop can be harvested in less than seven years compared to 20 or more years for hardwood.

Brozna's clients, who range from students to retirees to expectant mothers, are responding to these green concepts for aesthetic, environmental and health reasons. His business has grown so rapidly that he's had to expand his warehouse. Brozna is even thinking of moving to a larger space to house not only lumber products, but the green options for countertops, flooring and paints he sells.

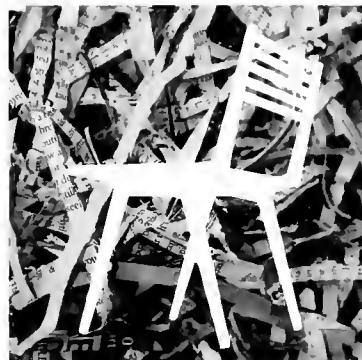


Greg Frederick of Architectural Outfitters



Marcie Blouch of Blumarc Designs





Anthony Brozna designs furniture using sustainable materials such as bamboo and PaperStone, a 100 percent, post-consumer recycled-paper product.

"People are ready," Brozna says. "They're interested in using a product that's not toxic to their house. People are really questioning how we got to this place. It just doesn't make sense. You can do things differently."

## Spreading the word

Brozna is a man on a mission. When he's not in his showroom or shop, he's spreading the word of green. Brozna works with builders, cabinetmakers, furniture makers, designers, architects and contractors to get eco-friendly products into their hands. He holds sessions to demonstrate the latest techniques to locals. Recently he held a workshop to train contractors in how to apply American Clay, a natural earth plaster made of clay, reclaimed marble dust and water. It comes in 42 colors and goes over drywall, existing painted walls or cinder block. It looks like Venetian plaster when applied.

## Did you know?

VCU's recycling rate is more than 25 percent, representing 772 tons of recycled paper products, glass and aluminum cans each year.

"I'm really trying to stimulate and build a network of people," Brozna says. "That to me is the absolute most important thing, to build that local network

so everybody is on the same page to grow this way of thinking."

The industry is taking notice. In 2007, Brozna won the Best Green Business award from the Virginia Sustainable Building Network, the only statewide organization that brings together representatives interested in building healthy, energy-efficient, environmentally friendly buildings and sustainable communities.

Another VCU alumnus dedicated to eco-conscious building and design is **Greg Frederick** (B.A. '95/H&S; B.A. '98/H&S). He owns Architectural Outfitters, a custom woodworking operation in Richmond. Frederick uses reclaimed wood, formaldehyde-free wood, water-based finishes and sustainable products made from sorghum, bamboo and coconut trees. He gets his green supplies from Brozna.

"There are only a handful of distributors nationwide and we're fortunate enough to have one of them right here in Richmond," Frederick says of ECO Supply Center.

Not surprisingly, the two entrepreneurs collaborate on numerous projects — both Richmond-based and up

Did you know?  
VCU's housekeeping contractors are required to use "green" products for cleaning all of the university's academic space.

and down the East Coast. They share an enthusiasm for their craft and their eco-friendly products. Frederick, too, feels part of his job is to boost the awareness of green design to the local community. Part of that education is letting the average consumer know that green materials are no longer difficult to find nor are they prohibitively expensive.

"I never want people to feel like they can't afford green because there's always some sort of an option," Frederick says. "As the industry opens up more to green products and it starts to get a little more competitive, the price point will continue to come down."

## Growing call for green

Already Frederick sees a marked increase in his clients' interest in green materials — and not just because they are good for the environment. "They are really gorgeous products," he says. "They can stand on their own aside from the fact that they're green."

After five years in business, Frederick is beyond busy. His hangar-sized warehouse hums with the sound of

## Did you know?

Over the past five years, VCU has invested more than \$7 million on energy improvement projects in its buildings.

machinery and sawdust coats every surface. Frederick attributes the nonstop activity to finding his green niche. "The concept sells itself," he says. "Now that it's not so much more expensive, it's hard to come up with a good reason not to go green."

### Designing for the future

In order to keep up with the trend and prepare its future designers to enter this great green world, the VCU Department of Interior Design tweaked its undergraduate and graduate curricula to reflect the growing demand for sustainable products.

"We try to integrate green into all of the curriculum," says **Jennifer Hamilton** (M.F.A. '07/A), a professor and the administrative director in the interior design department.

Students in the department take the required course "Advanced Material Studies for Interior Environments." They work with the latest green products, such as bamboo, cork and Kirei

board. When doing specs, students try to keep the environment in mind. "It's important to spec, say hardwood, from within 500 miles to counteract fuel emissions," Hamilton says. "Otherwise it defeats the purpose of being green."

Green design is definitely here to stay. "People want it because it's cool and hip," Hamilton says. "Hopefully designers will learn more about it and push it. If we can do our jobs, it will progress and become better."

**Marcie Blough** (B.F.A. '05) is one of those designers out in the field. Her design firm, Blumarc Designs, located in Richmond, does residential and smaller commercial projects. Blough tries to go green as often as possible and finds that she doesn't have to work too hard to convince her clients to do the same.

"I don't often have people say no to green design," she says. The only reasons they might are cost and unfamiliarity of the product. So, Blough, similarly to Brozna and Frederick, takes on the role of educator.

"I literally will take my clients on a field trip and say, 'This is our time to learn about the product and see how you

can change the world,'" Blough says. "I think people are surprised when they actually see a [green] product, that it's really amazing quality."

Blough stresses that eco-conscious design does not just hinge on new products. Reusing objects is important as well. Instead of throwing out a piece of furniture, she might encourage a client to refinish it. Or rather than getting rid of a couch and having it sit in a landfill somewhere, she often suggests that a client get some new fabric and reupholster.

"You don't have to go 100 percent green," Blough says. "Just start making those steps."

Ultimately, these VCU alumni and others involved in the green building industry believe that as more people get the message about using environmentally friendly products, the trend will soon become the standard. "So five years from now, hopefully, it's just going to be green," Brozna says. "It's not going to be this special option."

Frederick ventures one step further. "I'd like to think that green is the mainstay," he says, "and the traditional products we've been using up until now will become obsolete."

*Erin Egan is a contributing writer for Shafer Court Connections. Sources for "Did you know?" include bambootechnologies.com, The New York Times and VCU Facilities Management. Color palette based on eco-friendly YOLO colorhouse paints.*

# Rice Center takes 'LEED' in VCU green initiative

By Jennifer Carmean

Visitors to the new education building at Virginia Commonwealth University's Inger and Walter Rice Center for Environmental Life Sciences won't have to travel very far to learn about sustainable design. The lesson will begin at the front door — literally.

"It's our flagship project," says Carl Purdin, VCU assistant director of design services. "We've registered the plans with the U.S. Green Building Council with the intent of receiving the platinum rating. When people come out to this facility, they'll experience firsthand a broad range of sustainable design principles and concepts."

The goal to attain platinum certification through the council's rating system stemmed from the Rice Center's mission.

"Part of the mission of the center is to foster environmental education, and thus appropriate environmental practices, among the public," says Leonard A. Smuck, Ph.D., director of the center. "Because of this, we felt that it was important to not only use the building as a location to educate students and the general public about appropriate environmentally sustainable practices, but to also have the building itself be a showcase of how to put sustainability into practice."

Scheduled to open March 2008, this 5,000-square-foot facility has the potential to score well above the minimum 52 points needed to earn platinum certification according to the council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design scorecard for new construction. Features will include a geothermal heating and cooling system, photovoltaic solar collectors, a state-of-the-science sewage disposal system, sustainable and recycled building materials, rain

gardens and permeable paving systems to collect storm water runoff, cisterns to collect rainwater for toilets, water-efficient plumbing fixtures, and a vegetated roof system. The building design also maximizes the use of daylight to reduce the need for artificial lighting and to minimize total amount of light pollution.

In 2003, when VCU first established its six-year capital plan, sustainable design was in limited use. Few manufacturers carried the supplies needed, and developers were faced with high costs.

"At that time, the price point was 3 to 5 percent above the return," explains Brian Ohlinger, VCU associate vice president of Facilities Management. "Now manufacturers are getting on board and we're looking at a 1 to 2 percent return — sometimes cost neutral."

"It makes good sense in the long term to use sustainable design, both economically and environmentally," he says. "It's a simple way we can make a difference in the world, and make a lasting impact on the lives of our children and their children."

In addition to the education building, VCU partnered with Virginia Game and Inland Fisheries to design their Region 1 headquarters at the Rice property. Other VCU green building projects include a student services and recreational sports facility on the MCV Campus and a student facility for recreational sports on the Monroe Park Campus, as well as the Medical Sciences Building II, an addition to the School of Dentistry and the School of Engineering Health and Life Sciences Lab.

*Jennifer Carmean is a contributing writer for Shafer Court Connections.*



Color rendering courtesy of Richard Chancovich



VCU brings viewers  
programming in  
high-definition format

# Real TV by real students





## Virginia Commonwealth University

students are putting their own spin on reality television through a unique production operation – VCU TV/HD.

One of the first in the country to produce TV programming in high-definition format, VCU's University News Services and executive producer and manager Dan Brazda pulled together a team of eight highly talented students to run the series. They do it all from preproduction through postproduction.

"I want to provide a creative playground of sorts for the students that will allow them to produce what I call 'cinematic television.' Our shows are more like short films than typical formulaic TV fare," Brazda says.

The programs are a half-hour in length and produced in *cinéma vérité*, non-narrative style, which means they are "real" reality TV. The students have gone behind the scenes at the VCU Medical Center's Level-1 trauma center and VCU's theatre department, explored the music scene in Richmond, profiled student filmmakers and their films and observed the unique characters that run one of the most popular pizza restaurants in the area.

"It's been great to be a part of such a unique program like VCU TV/HD. It gives us a unique opportunity to expand our skills and have our voices heard," says **Lisa Figueroa** (B.S. '07/MC), a recent graduate of mass communications and one of the first students hired at VCU TV/HD.

The idea for the high-end, student-run TV production studio came from VCU Board of Visitors member **Dick Robertson** (B.S. '67/MC) and VCU Rector Thomas Rosenthal, both of whom have strong ties to the TV industry. Robertson recently was named senior adviser to the Warner Bros. Television Group after serving 17 years as president of Warner Bros. Domestic Television Distribution. Rosenthal, CEO of MedOutcomes Inc., is also chairman of the board of Commonwealth Public Broadcasting Corp.

They led the university in establishing a partnership with the Community Idea Stations, owned by Commonwealth Public Broadcasting, to air VCU TV/HD programs.

"What a great advantage for the Community Idea Stations to have local content, local programming," Rosenthal says. "There's so much intellectual property that exists in the university."

He and Robertson agree that VCU TV/HD offers the right format, the right medium, to tap into the university's diverse assets and allow students and faculty members from all disciplines to contribute to content.

"You always think you have it right but we've just been blown away," Rosenthal says of the series' first year.

With the number of shows expected to double in the coming year, Robertson says he looks forward to seeing where VCU TV/HD takes viewers next.

"It is developing so robustly," Robertson says. "We've just scratched the surface of what it could be."



Thomas Rosenthal and Dick Robertson

*Compiled from staff reports. VCU TV/HD programs are available online at [www.vcutvhd.vcu.edu](http://www.vcutvhd.vcu.edu) for streaming or download, and air on a regular schedule over Community Idea Stations WCVW-TV channel 57 and cable channel 24 in Richmond.*

**VCU** TV  
HD

# campus connections

## Reunions, celebrations and tours bring alumni together and showcase VCU

More than 400 alumni returned to campus for Reunion Weekend, April 27-29, which featured open houses, receptions, anniversary celebrations, a concert and other special events for Richmond Professional Institute graduates and African-American Alumni Council members. Here's a glimpse at the weekend's festivities.

### Reliving fond RPI memories

From the opening reception at The Jefferson Hotel to Sunday's farewell breakfast, RPI alumni relived their fondest memories, renewed old friendships and observed the tremendous growth and development of VCU from its RPI roots.

"It was wonderful," **Alice Gaskill Taylor** (B.F.A. '66) says. "A group of us from the arts met last year and agreed to come again this year." The classmates swapped stories about their "house mothers," who would randomly perform room checks for tidiness and made beds. "Neither I nor my roommate, **Bobbe Kennedy** (B.F.A. '66), were characteristically neat," Taylor says. "So at Christmas, when we all decorated our doors, we wrapped the door in paper with a big ribbon and a card that said, 'To Miss Ranier from Bobbe and Alice: Do not open till Christmas.'"

RPI students often lived in former residences that were remodeled for their use, including Founders Hall and the Ritter-Hickok House. During the weekend, alumni were treated to open houses, walking tours and panel discussions highlighting these historic homes as well as VCU's new buildings and familiar sights on and around campus.

**Les Simpson** (Cert. '55/B; B.S. '57/E), who hadn't seen the campus for 20 years, was pleased that many of the older houses still line Franklin Street. "Three of us lived in a small apartment on the third floor of Adams House at 914 West Franklin. We had a lot of fun. That's probably why I had to take English four times to get credit for two classes," he jokes.

Simpson's roommate, **Ed Peeples, Ph.D.**, (B.S. '57/E), spoke at the Golden Circle Breakfast about RPI, where he says he learned to love great music, the arts, behavioral sciences and history. The RPI faculty members were "remarkable educational missionaries," he says. "Some were the rare characters who stretched our minds and our commitments, and others, the straight-faced ones, who kept us civil."

Peeples also addressed today's VCU: "Keep tuned to the news reports of our young strapping progeny, the Virginia Commonwealth University. Watch for the next Noble Prize emanating from this place, watch for another star to light up Broadway, watch for the next life-changing technology to emerge, watch for the next Pulitzer Prize and watch for the next sports record to be broken.

"Watch closely this place, which could not have become what it is without heeding the voices left among the cobblestones on which we trod in our youth so many years ago."

### Marking a social work milestone

VCU's School of Social Work – the oldest school of social work in the South – turned 90 this year in grand fashion. The birthday celebration kicked off in March with an anniversary party at the home of the school's Northern Virginia M.S.W. program in Alexandria, Va., and culminated in April at Reunion Weekend with a concert on Shafer Court.

#### SAVE THE DATE

Mark your calendars  
for the 2006 RPI and  
African-American Alumni  
Council reunions,  
April 25-27.

Jacquelin Warren (M.S.W. '50) attended the March party with her daughter Ellen Warren, also a social worker. "We had a wonderful time," she says. "It was such a good opportunity to talk with everyone."

Warren recently retired from a 70-year career in social work, ending her private practice at the age of 89. "I was so lucky to find the right thing. Not everyone does," she says. "I've done just about everything." She worked with the Children's Home Society of Richmond, placing babies for adoption, and later served as director of family services for the state. "We set up the first mental health services for children at clinics in Norfolk and Chesapeake."

Warren also was instrumental in getting state licensure for social work professionals. "We were always lobbying the state legislature. Social work has come a long way," she says.

"Social justice" — the unifying theme around which the various programs of the School of Social Work are organized — reverberated throughout the festivities, from an exhibit of thought-provoking artworks by VCU students to a clinical symposium about the ethics of social work practice in mental health.

"The reunion's theme of [social justice and] the school's progress since 1917 reminded me why I attended VCU and of the importance of our mission," Jack Damon (M.S.W. '68) says. A military retiree when he



(1): VCU professor Grace Harris, Ph.D., speaks with RPI alumnus Gene Hunt (B.S. '59/B; M.S. '61/B) and his wife, Rosalia. (2): At the Golden Circle Breakfast alumnae Ann Poehlman (B.S. '57/AHP), Archie Blaha (B.S. '57/AHP), Dolores Taylor Morgan (B.S. '53/AHP) and Barbara Innes Smith (B.S. '56/AHP) display a 1950 aerial photo of the RPI campus. (3): Alumni celebrate at the annual AAAC dance, co-hosted by the Eta Theta chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Inc. (4): Ed Peebles, Ph.D., (B.S. '57/E), Ken Magill (B.S. '65/B; M.S. '69/E) and John Magill

(B.S. '67/H&S; M.S.W. '69) catch up at the opening reception at The Jefferson Hotel. (5): Jackie Tunstall Bynum (B.S. '83/H&S), co-chair of the AAAC Programs and Events Committee, and Jamie Flagler Harrison hit the links at the AAAC and Young Alumni Council Golf Classic. (6): "Stone Age RPI vs. Modern Day VCU" brings smiles to attendees as students, alumni and faculty compare life at RPI with life at VCU. (7): VCU professor Micah L. McCreary, Ph.D., facilitates the AAAC Saturday Morning Symposium on "The N-word."

earned his master's through the school's Northern Virginia program, Damon and his wife, Deborah, made the road trip to Richmond, Va., for the April celebration.

"The faculty, staff, graduates and students clearly share a belief that we can make a difference," he says. "Regardless of which 'track' you selected in school, our best approach to achieving social justice is to be a unified force."

That idea continued at the "Sip and Support" wine tasting, where **Michelle Acree** (Ph.D. '03/SW) spoke. "Like tiny drops of water," she says, "regular, collective, small contributions can make an enormous impact — like oceans."

Proceeds from the event benefited the School of Social Work Dissertation Honor Fund scholarship, and Acree encouraged her fellow alumni to give back, emphasizing "the life-changing and continuing positive effect of VCU on each of our lives — the relationships, the learning and how much we benefit from these today."

After stepping down from the podium, Acree soaked in her surroundings. "It was wonderful to be on campus and to see everyone. The genuine warmth and feeling of being [a part of the] VCU family is almost indescribable to someone who has not experienced it," she says. "The VCU School of Social Work has always impressed me as an example of how a wonderful, supportive climate strongly contributes to its academic and professional excellence."

## Catching up with the AAAC

For their 17th reunion, members and supporters of the African-American Alumni Council came back to campus to affirm their connections to each other and to the university.

"I have [always] enjoyed seeing the folks return each year and getting a chance to meet first-timers," says **Mary Francis** (B.S. '95/H&S), AAAC secretary. This year, though, she says, more age groups were represented, bringing a new aspect to the weekend conversations. "I had the most fun this year being with folks who had graduated 10 and 20 years before me as well as individuals who have graduated in the past 10 years. Having that age range of people enjoying themselves at one function is a wonderful experience."

Friday's events provided two networking opportunities, first on the links for the annual golf classic and later that evening at a reception highlighting alumni entrepreneurs. On Saturday, Micah McCreary, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology at VCU, facilitated a midday symposium on "The N-Word" to examine its origins and power. The weekend's events were topped off by a park outing and flag football game and the ever-popular reunion dance.

"It's great to see people you maybe haven't seen in years, and to see the changes in people you saw last year," says council member **Teresa Yarbrough** (B.S. '81/B). "Reunion is a great opportunity to talk about things that have happened in your life, about your kids. I look forward to it every year. It's a time to just get away and be back in college with friends."

*Reporting by Mary Ellen Mercer, former publications editor, VCU Alumni Association.*



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### VCU Alumni Association

Linda Stout-Brown

(804) 924-7200

[www.vcu-mcva alumni.org](http://www.vcu-mcva alumni.org)

### African-American Alumni Council

Larry Powell

(804) 924-2500

[www.vcu-aaac.org](http://www.vcu-aaac.org)





: Anne Latane Menin Gibson-Alexick (Cert. '52/A) and David Alexick (B.F.A. '64; M.F.A. '66/A) enjoy cake at the RPI commemorative sculpture dedication. : Martha Riis Moore (B.S. '37/H&S), the oldest alumna at the RPI reunion, enjoys the Golden Circle Breakfast. : The Cary Street Gym plays host to a game of hoops for AAAC reunion attendees. : Frank Baskind, Ph.D., dean of the School of Social Work, speaks at the RPI Alumni Dinner which featured a performance by the Theatre VCU cast of "Smokey Joe's Cafe."

: Alumni, faculty and their families dance to the sounds of the Imitators, featuring social work professor Joe Walsh. "Cake and a Concert on Shafer Court" celebrated the dedication of the RPI commemorative sculpture.

: The Farewell Brunch and Memorial Tribute, held at the VCU Scott House, gives alumni one last chance to enjoy each other's company before returning home. : Using "play money" to wager, alumni at the blackjack table give the AAAC Las Vegas-style Casino Night a thumbs-up.

# VCU

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# \$162,85

**I**N 1999, VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY BEGAN THE CAMPAIGN FOR VCU, EMBARKING ON ITS MOST AMBITIOUS AND EXTENSIVE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN EVER. When VCU closed the campaign in June 2007, its generous individual, corporate and foundation donors had contributed \$410,341,216,

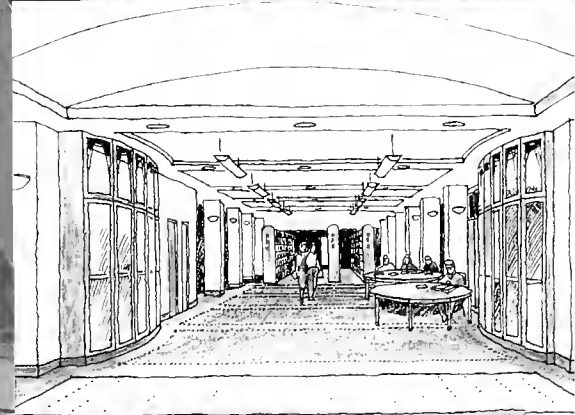
shattering the \$330.5 million combined goal for the university's two campuses.

The more than \$162 million raised by the schools and units on the Monroe Park Campus has already begun to transform the campus, with new buildings and additional scholarships and professorships, as well as revamped approaches to teaching and learning.

This campaign, while for VCU, was really about the impact on students, the community and, consequently, society. "Together, we not only have helped VCU become a better place for learning, but we also have helped make our community, and indeed our world, a better place for learning," says VCU President Eugene P. Trani, Ph.D.

# 6, 127

The Monroe Park Campus expansion, providing a collaborative home for the schools of Business and Engineering, is one of the campaign's hallmark successes. Right, from top: The Mary and Frances Youth Center extends VCU's commitment to education into the community. The VCU Rice Center provides students statewide access to one of the region's greatest natural resources. On campus, a dedicated space for graduate students in the James Branch Cabell Library will help attract the brightest minds, as will more than 250 new scholarships. Soon the Adcenter will move into a top-notch facility befitting the No. 1 ad school in the country.





# THE BIG PICTURE

**BRACKET-BUSTERS** > Sensational. Inspiring. Heart-stopping. No matter how Rams fans describe the VCU men's basketball 2007 CAA Championship and the Rams' storybook win in the first round of the NCAA Tournament, they all agree on one thing: the 2006-07 season will never be forgotten. What will fans remember most? ... When the Rams overcame a five-point deficit in the final minutes of their 65-59 CAA Championship win? ... Eric Maynor's game-winning jumper over Duke University that anointed the VCU Rams national darlings? ... While fans debate their favorite moments, the return of CAA Coach of the Year Anthony Grant — along with the arrival of a highly touted recruiting class that ranked fifth among the mid-majors — makes it clear there's one more thing VCU fans can agree on: this is only the beginning.



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VCU Shafer Court Connection







## the 'write' stuff: SHAFER COURT'S FORMER EDITOR SHARES HER STORY

Mary Ellen Mercer arrived at Virginia Commonwealth University in 1979. During her tenure, Mercer has been an adjunct professor of children's literature and spent three hair-raising semesters teaching freshman composition. "I got better, but I'm more of a one-on-one writing coach," she says.

After teaching, Mercer went on to work as editor of five university magazines, three of which she co-created — Shafer Court Connections; *Advance*, for patients and professionals at the Massey Cancer Center; and *Paradigm*, covering scientific and scholarly research on VCU's two campuses. Throughout her 19-year publications career at VCU, Mercer wrote and edited many award-winning stories on VCU professors, students and alumni. Before retiring in June 2007, Mercer sat down to talk about her time at VCU.

**How did you find your way to Alumni Relations?** Well, I was working on other alumni publications and Bill Iles, the executive director, had read some pieces I'd put together. I guess he liked the way I wrote. I was perky. And he really wanted me to edit the alumni magazines. He also wanted some unity between Shafer Court Connections and *Scarab*, the MCV Campus alumni magazine, so he wanted the same person editing both of them. I thought, *Yikes!*

**What has been your biggest challenge?** I can't stand leaving anybody out. Or any quirky or interesting bit of information. Everything I write is always too long. *It's copy heavy. It's copy heavy.* I tried to get both personality and information in every story because I thought the university magazine should be a place where you learn things. I saw the magazine as continuing education. Someone once said that "university" is a long conversation (when it's not a long meeting) and I always thought that the magazine was a way of continuing the conversation.

**What is your greatest accomplishment?** I really do feel as though much of the time I've been able to present news and people and do it so that, as Bill Iles used to say, 'We take the work seriously but we don't take ourselves too seriously.'

I came to a realization that what people want most is to be recognized. Someone to say, *Oh, that's who you are. That's what you do. That's what is important to you.* So when you tell their story, what you try to do is give a sense of that. It has to be, as much as possible, their story not yours. And I really feel that the subject of the article — alumni and the university — should be in the foreground and the writer should be in the background.

**Is there one story that stands out?** There's one that I'm particularly proud of. It was a cover story about the integration of Richmond Professional Institute — now the Monroe Park Campus [Shafer Court Connections, summer 1995]. It was hard to do because it was a touchy subject. I talked to alumni from the era when African-American undergraduates

were starting to move into the campus and then gradually the university opened up more to them. Seeing the article, other alumni wrote in about attempts to do this earlier. But the university wasn't ready for it because Richmond wasn't ready.

The other thing that was cool about this story was that the library was doing an online African-American historical and cultural archive for Virginia and they put the story into the archive. I was particularly pleased about that.

But I've done a lot of things that I feel pretty good about when I look over back issues. Thanks to our alumni, I've had a tremendous variety, which has been terrific. And I've had a chance to meet a lot of really wonderful people who are doing really good things. I always felt that my job as a writer, journalist and editor was to let 'good people' who were reading what I wrote know who the other 'good people' were, to sort of generate some hope.

— Interview conducted by Erin Egan, a contributing writer for Shafer Court Connections.

# National events put **RICHMOND** on the map

By Polly Roberts

For visitors in search of a little Southern hospitality and a lot of history, Richmond doesn't disappoint. In fact, what guests will discover in the River City reaches far beyond the ordinary.

"Many people don't have a clear-cut concept of what Richmond has to offer," says Wilson H. Flohr, president of Richmond Region 2007. "We're a vibrant city with an enormous amount of history, but look at us as an entire package: entertainment, educational, recreational, all woven together."

A nonprofit organization created in 2004, RR7 coordinates signature events commemorating the nation's 400th anniversary this year.

"One of our goals is to really help create an image and awareness for Richmond outside of Virginia," Flohr says.

In May, RR7 hosted a replica of the 17th-century vessel *Godspeed* along Richmond's James River in remembrance of the boat's historic journey from Jamestown in 1607. Other RR7 signature events included June's James River Adventure Games and October's National Folk Festival.

The traveling festival — now in its third year in Richmond — drew more than 100,000 people to the city's riverfront in 2006 and brought an estimated \$4 million in economic impact to the region over the course of the three-day weekend event.

Each year, performers and craftspeople celebrate America's cultural roots through music, dance, crafts, storytelling and food.

"It's the best entertainment that you've never heard of," Flohr says. "Some of the entertainment is international — from Canada, Ireland, Mongolia — and it's passed down from one generation to another."

Other artists, such as the Richmond Indigenous Gourd Orchestra, are home-grown.

Band member **Christopher Hibben** (B.F.A. '88) calls the orchestra's blend of Paleolithic lounge music — created from locally grown gourds transformed into drums, flutes, harps and shakers — a mixture of goofiness, love of music and love of gourds.

"It's wonderful that we could do all of this in our own backyard and have hundreds of people and other acts come out and enjoy what we share," Hibben says of the band's 2006 festival performance.

Hibben attended this year's Oct. 12-14 festival as a spectator to support an event that he says has positively impacted the city.

"There's a lot of potential for Richmond," Hibben says. "The folk festival was really fun because of that sense of being part of something that can make Richmond a really great place to live."

— Polly Roberts is a contributing writer for *Shafer Court Connections*.

Christopher Hibben (top left) jams with the Richmond Indigenous Gourd Orchestra at the 2006 National Folk Festival. For the past three years, the annual festival has brought performers from around the world to Richmond in celebration of a wide variety of cultural traditions.



## The music continues

While the National Folk Festival will pack up and head to a new city after 2007, the foundation it established will remain. Richmond will continue to host a free annual folk festival with the same high quality of performances, activities and more.

"This is an opportunity to continue the festival — with a different name — and hopefully have the same scope," says Wilson Flohr, president of Richmond Region 2007.

Past performer Christopher Hibben of the Richmond Indigenous Gourd Orchestra says presenting an event of the folk festival's size gives Richmond a source of pride.

"Who would have thought that little old us could do this? It's nice to say that we can," he says. "We knew how to handle this, put on a good show and people have a great time."

Venture Richmond will host the city's future folk festivals. For more information, visit [www.venturerichmond.com](http://www.venturerichmond.com).

# Snapshots

News, highlights and event photos from the Virginia Commonwealth University Alumni Association and the African-American Alumni Council.



## School of Business names 2007 Alumnus of the Year

**Stephen Y. Dickinson** (B.S. '70/B) with his wife, Pat, accepts the VCU School of Business Alumnus of the Year award, an annual honor given by the School of Business Alumni Board. Dickinson is controller of Media General Inc. and one of the founders of the VCU Controllers Executive RoundTable.

## Alumni rally for the Rams during NCAA Tournament

**Cullen Shelton** (B.S. '02/H&S) jumps to his feet while watching the 'black and gold' play sixth-seeded Duke University in the opening round of the men's NCAA basketball tournament. The VCU Alumni Association organized the "watch party" at Bandito's in the Fan for alumni who couldn't travel to Buffalo, N.Y., for the game. The restaurant was packed with alumni and friends wearing gold shirts and other Rams paraphernalia. The excitement — and the crowd — grew days later when the group gathered again at Bandito's to watch as the Rams challenged the University of Pittsburgh.

**Eugene Hunt** (B.S. '59/B; M.S. '61/B) and his wife, Rosalia, cheer on the VCU men's basketball team during the 2006-07 season. The Henrico, Va., couple, who have followed the team for more than 30 years, traveling all over the country and even overseas, didn't miss a single game last season — home or away. The Hunts were among thousands of alumni who showed up or tuned in to root for the Rams during their championship season.



## VCUAA welcomes new board members

Seven directors have joined the VCU Alumni Association. Directors are selected by a nominating committee and elected by the board.

**Rejena Carreras** (B.F.A. '70; M.A.E. '80), vice president, Carreras Jewelers, Richmond, Va.

**William L. Davis** (B.S. '74/H&S; M.S. '79/H&S), retired captain, Henrico County Division of Police, Richmond, Va.

**David R. Dennier** (B.S. '75/B), controller, Virginia Home for Boys & Girls, Richmond, Va.

**Stephanie L. Holt** (B.S. '74/H&S), account manager, Xerox Corp., Richmond, Va.

**Gary Inman**, interior designer, Glave and Holmes Associates Architecture & Design, Richmond, Va.

**Mary Perkinson** (B.F.A. '91; B.S. '03/En), engineer, Northrop Grumman Newport News, Newport News, Va.

**John Schwartz** (B.S. '69/B), managing director, Have Site Will Travel Ltd., Richmond, Va.



Carreras



Davis



Dennier



Holt



Inman



Perkinson



Schwartz



## Chip Rossi bids farewell to alumni

Nearly three years ago, I wrote to introduce myself as VCU's new executive director of alumni relations. Now, I say farewell to VCU and all its wonderful alumni and staff. For family reasons, I have moved to Charlotte, N.C., to take over direction of the alumni office at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

It has truly been exciting to be at such a dynamic and diverse university. In only a short amount of time, I've watched VCU grow its facilities as well as its student population.

From the beginning I knew I was part of an excellent team. The VCU Alumni Association and MCV Alumni Association boards and the able staff on both campuses are strongly committed to the mission of the university.

I have enjoyed knowing and working with **JoLynne DeMary** (M.Ed. '72) and **George Burke** (M.D. '70), immediate past presidents of the VCU and MCV alumni associations. I know that new presidents **Dan Massey** (B.S. '92/B), at the VCUSA, and **Mary Shall** (Ph.D. '91/M), at the MCVA, will continue the hard, creative work. Members and officers of the African-American Alumni Council are another important part of the VCU team who have created a strong network of support for African-American students and other university programs.

With such a great team, VCU and the alumni associations will certainly continue to grow. I will be watching VCU with interest and affection as the university and the alumni associations develop and deepen.

After three great years on campus, I will always be a Rams fan!

*Chip Rossi*



Chip Rossi, second from right, shows his Rams spirit at a watch party, sponsored by the VCU Alumni Association at Bandito's, when VCU took on Duke University in the first round of the NCAA tournament.

*Peter Wyeth, vice president for University Advancement, is leading a national search for an assistant vice president for university alumni relations.*



## RPI alumni sculpture sets 51-year legacy in stone

Capturing the innovation and excitement often associated with the Richmond Professional Institute, a predecessor of VCU, "Tableith" by artist **Charles Ponticello** (M.F.A. '94/A) will soon stand to the west of Ginter House as a prominent, physical reminder of RPI's legacy.

Ponticello's piece consists of 51 cast discs stacked atop each other and spiraling upward. Each disc represents a year in RPI's life and is inscribed on its edge with a significant phrase from the corresponding year at RPI. The base will include a "founder's stone" with an oval relief in bronze of Henry Hibbs, founder of the Richmond School of Social Economy, which became RPI. Some small stones are laid nearby, Ponticello explains, "as if waiting to be lifted into position for the future years."

"My primary focus is to produce a monumental effect with a sense of awe and respect rather than a 'stand out' personal interpretation with imagery that overcomes the purpose," Ponticello says.

Since plans for the sculpture were announced in winter 2006, RPI alumni have raised \$20,000 toward a goal of \$38,000 to build and install the monument. To contribute funds for the sculpture, contact Diane Stout-Brown at (804) 828-2586 or [dstout@vcu.edu](mailto:dstout@vcu.edu); or mail your contribution to VCU Alumni Relations, P.O. Box 843044, Richmond, VA 23284-3044.

## AAAC virtual store opens for business

Show your support for the African-American Alumni Council. Purchase merchandise — from reunion photo CDs to shirts and hats — online at [www.cafepress.com/aaac](http://www.cafepress.com/aaac). All profits benefit AAAC scholarship funds.

## Council recognizes Alumni of the Year



African-American Alumni Council President **Franklin Wallace** (B.F.A. '87) (center) honors AAAC 2007 Alumni of the Year recipients **Renee Jackson-Anderson**, Ph.D., (B.F.A. '83) and **W. Darrell Walden** (Ph.D. '93/B). The

pair were honored Feb. 16 during "Black History in the Making," an event sponsored by VCU's African American studies department. Jackson-Anderson, an assistant professor of merchandising and hospitality management who coordinates the e-merchandising program at the University of North Texas, was recognized for her commitment to ensuring student success. Walden, associate professor of accounting and information systems in the Robins School of Business at the University of Richmond, co-founded the Virginia Freedmen Project, which encourages families, particularly those within the African-American community, to discover their genealogy and family history.



# Class notes

Send information about your professional and personal accomplishments to [shafercourt@vcu.edu](mailto:shafercourt@vcu.edu). Or, mail your news to Shafer Court Connections, Virginia Commonwealth University, 827 W. Franklin St., P.O. Box 842041, Richmond, VA 23284-2041.

## Updates

### 1940s

**Martha Myers** (B.A. '46/A) dean (emeritus) of the American Dance Festival received an honorary degree presented by VCU President Eugene Trani, Ph.D., in 2006.

### 1960s

**William "Bill" Ginther\*** (B.S. '69/B, M.S. '74/B) recently retired as corporate executive vice president and Mid-Atlantic Group Retail LOB manager for SunTrust Bank. He has also served as president of the VCU Alumni Association and is a trustee of the School of Business Foundation.

**Sandy Grabman** ('68/B) has had her third book released, "Pat Buttram, the Rocking Chair Humorist."

**John Schwartz** (B.S. '69/B) has been appointed to the Henrico Board of Real Estate Review and Equalization.

**Bernice Smith** (B.S. '66/MC) was appointed to the Board of Directors for Habitat for Humanity Peninsula for the 2006-07 term.

### 1970s

**Lindsay Harrington\*** (B.S. '73/B) was appointed to the Board of Trustees of Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Myers, Fla., by Gov. Jeb Bush and appointed to the Board of Directors of the Johnnie B. Byrd Sr. Alzheimer's Center and Research Institute by Florida House Speaker Allan Bense.

**Myrna Howells-DeAustria, Ph.D.**, (B.S. '64/B; M.S. '70/B) has retired as dean of business and information technology at Owens Community College in Toledo, Ohio.

**Don Jones, Ph.D.**, (B.S. '74/E, M.S. '81/E) was chosen to serve as an editorial board member of the American College of Sports Medicine's Health & Fitness Journal.

**Mark Kittrell** (B.S. '75/B) has worked in the residential mortgage industry since 1973. He co-founded Liberty Mortgage in 1997 in Richmond, Va.

**Janet Lenz** (B.S. '76/H&S) was the recipient of the American Counseling Association's 2007 Professional Development Award.

**Henry Lowenstein, Ph.D.**, (B.S. '75/B) is a business dean at the E. Craig Wall Sr. College of Business Administration at Coastal Carolina University in South Carolina.

**Garnet Miller\*** (B.S. '72/B) recently retired from Fleetwood Travel Trailers after 33 years. Originally employed as a plant accountant, he moved into materials as a buyer at the plant level and was promoted to the eastern region assistant materials manager. He lives in Winchester, Va.

**Elaine Mitchell\*** (B.F.A. '72) is vice president of Twelfth Night Club in New York City.

**Joe Nimerfro** (B.S. '70/B; M.S. '73/B) is president of YTI Career Institute in Lancaster, Pa.

**Joyce Pritchard\*** (B.S. '70/E) is the co-founder of the Southside Virginia Czech/Slovak Heritage Society. The group is building a database of all Czech/Slovaks that settled in Southside Virginia from 1887-1915.

**Thomas Savage** (B.S. '78/MC) was named, for the second consecutive year, to Virginia Business Magazine's "Legal Elite" in 2006.

### 1980s

**Derrick Artis, Ph.D.**, (B.S. '85/H&S) has been named the Pennsylvania College of Optometry's Alumnus of the Year for 2006. He is the director of professional affairs at Vistakon, a division of Johnson and Johnson Vision Care Inc., in Jacksonville, Fla.

**Tammy Cummings** (B.S. '85/MC) joined the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond as vice president of human resources for the Fifth District.

**Bradley Gales** (B.S. '87/B) is the internal audit director at the Virginia Department of Transportation and is an accredited financial examiner.

**Barbara S. Gibbs** (M.S. '83/M) has joined the law firm of Bose McKinney & Evans in West Lafayette, Ind., as a counsel in the Intellectual Property Group.

**Craig Giese** (B.S. '87/B) is a certified public accountant with Dehnert, Clarke & Co., P.C., in Irvington, Va.

**Robin Gliboff** (M.S.W. '83) is the associate executive director at Greenspring, in Springfield, Va.

**Stephen W. Harms** (M.S.W. '82) is the deputy chief of staff for Virginia Gov. Timothy Kaine.

**Andrew Hulcher\*** (B.S. '84/B) is owner of Yes Events, based in Richmond, Va.

**Robert Killian** (B.F.A. '81; M.A. '87) received a first-place award from Washington Book Publishers as designer of "Temple of Invention," authored by Charles J. Robertson.

## Spotlight

### Young alumnus preaches the benefits of lifelong giving

To do by age 24:

- Earn a degree in business. Check.
- Embark on a successful career in the financial-services industry. Check.
- Pledge \$10,000 to alma mater. Check.

For Gaurav "G" Shrestha (B.S. '03/B), making such a generous gift to Virginia Commonwealth University was a no-brainer.

"If I had gone to another school, I don't think I would be where I am today. This gift is my way of saying thank you," says Shrestha, a financial planner with Virginia Asset Management.

Scholarships (plus hard work at a full-time job at SunTrust) helped Shrestha fund his VCU education.

"Being the benefactor — directly or indirectly — of the generosity of others taught me the power of giving back," he says.

That message of helping others is a mantra he passes on to new VCU alumni. Just after graduation, Shrestha worked with administration officials to create the Young Alumni Council as a steppingstone to keep new graduates linked to the university.

The council has made great strides in its first two years, organizing social get-togethers, career assistance, and seminars and other events to encourage participation with the VCU Alumni Association and other alumni.

One of Shrestha's main goals as council president — and a lifetime member of VCUAA — is to increase overall alumni association membership.

"Why wouldn't you join? To me, it's so inexpensive to become a member plus it's a small way of giving back because the association does so many things for students," he says.

For more information on how you can join the Young Alumni Council, call (804) 828-2586 or go online to [www.vcu-mcvalumni.org](http://www.vcu-mcvalumni.org).

*Adapted from "Early lessons teach the benefits of lifelong giving," originally published in the fall 2006 Campaign for VCU newsletter, "The Power of Personal Philanthropy."*



**Christopher Kilmartin, Ph.D.**, (M.S. '86/H&S, Ph.D. '88/H&S) was named a Fulbright Scholar. He is a psychology professor at the University of Mary Washington.

**Pamela Knox, Ph.D.**, (M.S. '82/H&S; Ph.D. '85/H&S) is the associate dean of the College of Graduate Studies and professor of psychology at Middle Tennessee State University.

**Lisa Laws** (B.S. '81/H&S) is a clinical research administrator at Duke University Medical Center. She is taking graduate classes at George Washington University toward a master's degree in health sciences with a concentration in clinical research administration.

**John Lawson, Ph.D.**, (M.A. '86/H&S) had his poetry chapbook, "Generations," published by St. Andrews College Press. He also was appointed coordinator of secondary education for Robert Morris University's English and communication teacher-certification programs.

**Lisa McCoig** (Cert. '86/B) made the 2006 list of Virginia's "Super CPAs."

**Cassandra "Sandy" Reynolds\*** (B.S. '85/B) serves as president of the board of directors for Richmond Metropolitan Habitat for Humanity.

**Mark Steinhoff** (B.A. '81/H&S) is a partner with Deloitte and Touche, based in Boston.

**Frank Wallace\*** (B.F.A. '87) was appointed to the Governor's Commission on National and Community Service. He is the director of Americorps and the America Reads Program at VCU.

**Eric Whittleton\*** (B.S. '84/B, Cert. '86/B) was elected as founding trustee of the VCU School of Business Foundation. He is the executive vice president of CACI International.

## 1990s

**Paul Adams** (B.S. '90/H&S) was recognized by American Lawyer Media in May 2007 as one of 12 Pennsylvania minority attorneys "On the Verge." This distinction highlights lawyers on their way to greater accomplishments.

**Fitsum Andargue** (B.S. '98/B) is an information technology manager with GE Healthcare Financial Services in Bethesda, Md. He lives in Alexandria, Va.

**Chuck Aulino** (B.S. '99/B) opened Action Autocycles, a used car and motorcycle dealership, in Richmond, Va.

**Ann Beverly** (B.S. '95/H&S; M.S. '97/H&S) is commission ombudsman for Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission. She also works part time as a VCU adjunct professor.

**Tanya Bolyard** (B.S. '99/B) became a Realtor and is the manager of Aegis Communications.

**Carl Davis** (B.S. '92/B) was promoted to president and chief operating officer for TOS, a Richmond-based general contractor.

**Lynn Fielitz** (Cert. '97/B) was promoted to associate professor of physical education at the United States Military Academy at West Point, N.Y. He is also the chief of the academy's information systems office.

**David W. Franke** (B.A. '91/H&S) has earned his real estate broker's license and started a new company, Turnkey Real Estate Services. He and his wife, Casey, and their son, Thatcher, live in Richmond, Va.

**Brian Fritsche** (B.S. '99/B) became president and CEO of TopForm Software Inc. in Atlanta in November 2006.

**Edward Gerardo** (M.B.A. '90) is the director of community health at Bon Secours Health System Inc. in Marriottsville, Md.

**Sherry Harper-McCombs** (M.F.A. '92/A) was awarded a \$4,000 Central Pennsylvania Consortium Mellow Fellowship for her project, Costume Storage Solutions.

She is the senior resident designer for the theatre and dance department at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pa.

**Bobby Martin Jr.** (B.F.A. '99) is a design director of jazz at Lincoln Center in New York City.

**Todd McCarthy** (B.S. '92/MC) is the director of athletic video at Georgia Tech.

**Ledelle Moe** (M.F.A. '96/A) received a Trustee Fellowship for Excellence in Teaching from Maryland Institute College of Art in 2006. She is a sculpture faculty member at MICA.

**Scott Naugle** (B.S. '95/B) is co-founder and managing partner of Real Property Investment Management LLC in McLean, Va.

**Jason Pensler\*** (B.S. '96/H&S) is an assistant principal at Poplar Tree Elementary School in Chantilly, Va. He lives in South Riding, Va.

**Joshua Poteat** (M.F.A. '97/H&S) won the 2005 Anning Press Prize for poetry, which included publication of his book, "Ornithologies."

## Spotlight

### After decades of hard work, animator lands two hit shows

Preschoolers and preteens may not know **Bob Boyle** (B.F.A. '86), but they probably know his shows. In just a year, "Wow! Wow! Wubbzy!" on Nickelodeon's pre-K channel Nick Jr. and "Yin Yang Yo!" part of Toon Disney's Jetix lineup, have made the animator's long-held dream a reality.

The secret behind his success boils down to passion and persistence.

After college graduation, Boyle headed to New York City where he worked as a free lance illustrator. "I had some good moments but it was sporadic," Boyle says.

In the late 1980s, animation hit a popularity streak with blockbuster movies such as "The Little Mermaid" and "Who Framed Roger Rabbit?" — both products of Disney's California studios. That's when Boyle decided to switch careers.

"Cartoons are my first love," he says. "I really wanted to do my own show. It's a dream of a lot of people out here [in Los Angeles]."

Boyle's first big break — landing a job on Howie Mandel's animated show "Bobby's World" — stemmed from a meeting with John Kricfalusi, creator of "Ren and Stimpy." Boyle also worked as an art director and producer on the "Fairly OddParents."

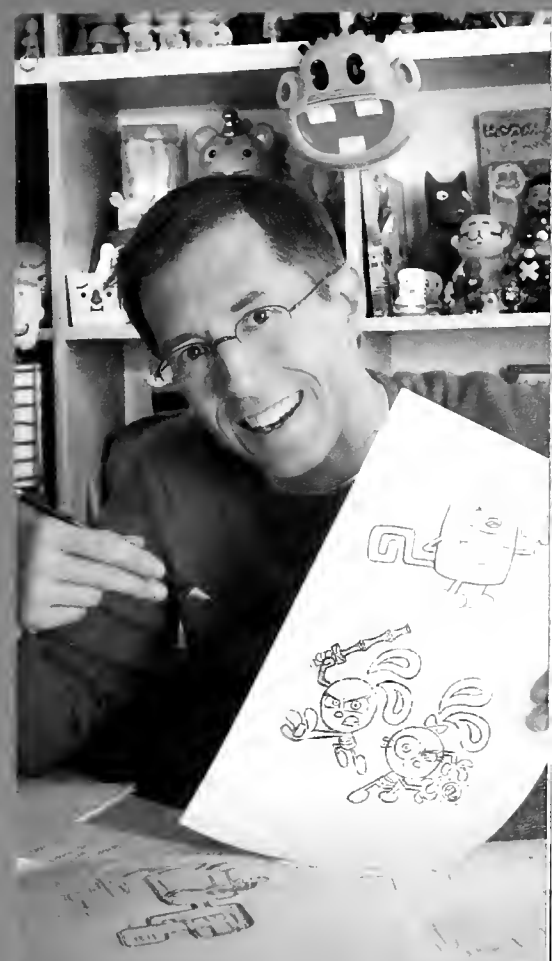
In his spare time, Boyle continued to develop his own ideas. First came "Wow! Wow! Wubbzy!" Boyle designed the characters around stories his young niece, Viviana, would tell. The pair initially created "Wow! Wow! Wubbzy!" as a book, which was then picked up by Nick Jr. as a cartoon for preschoolers, in spring 2006.

"Wow! Wow! Wubbzy" hit the air that summer and has since gained national success, soon airing internationally.

If debuting one show weren't enough, Boyle premiered "Yin Yang Yo!" on Toon Disney a week after "Wubbzy."

Boyle once again credits his creation — a cartoon about brother and sister ninja bunnies — to his family; this time to his wife, Teri, who's Japanese American. "She's exposed me to Japanese pop culture, which influenced me a lot with my drawings," Boyle says.

With two new shows under his belt, the VCU alumnus doesn't plan on slowing down. "I'm still working on more pitches and a couple of children's books," he says. "I just want to keep creating."



**James Propst** is teaching German at East Chapel Hill High School in Chapel Hill, N.C.

**David Whitt\*** was a finalist for CFO of the Year in 2006 awarded by Virginia Business Magazine. He was a founding member of the executive management team that formed Cavalier Telephone in Richmond, Va., in 1999.

**Barbie Wilson** is a program technician for The Improvement Association in Emporia, Va.

## 2000s

**Joseph Bryant Jr.** works as a risk manager for Fannie Mae. He lives in Centreville, Va.

**Mundy Hackett** published a book with the University of Missouri Press entitled "Missouri in Flight: The Bird Photography of Mundy Hackett," including more than 100 color images, interesting facts about Missouri birds and tips for amateur photographers.

**Leslie Hardesty\*** works as a treasury analyst with Qimonda North America. She and her husband also have started their own business, Nicholas W. Hardesty Construction.

**Christopher Hodgdon** received the 2005 Outstanding Dissertation Award in international accounting from the American Association for "Empirical Examination of the Effect of Firm Compliance with the Disclosure Requirements of International Accounting Standards on the Characteristics of Analysts' Earnings Forecasts."

**Nicole Johnson** was awarded the Ethel Payne Fellowship by the National Association of Black Journalists and traveled to South Africa to report on economic reform for women.

**Amanda Kay-Carpenter\*** is an admissions counselor at Richard Bland College in Petersburg, Va.

## Spotlight

### New class ring serves as a 'visible reminder' of VCU pride

An important symbol of Virginia Commonwealth University's culturally rich and diverse community, the new official VCU class ring unifies the university's growing number of alumni. The ring is the result of a multiyear collaboration between Jostens Inc., the VCU Alumni Association, the MCV Campus and Monroe Park Campus Student Government associations, VCU Business Services, and the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services.

While each ring includes the university name and the institution's 1838 founding date, a selection of four distinct symbols are available to ensure that the ring celebrates each graduate's personal VCU accomplishments.

The compass has become synonymous with the heart of the university. An icon from the Monroe Park Campus is the multitiered iron fountain in the center of Monroe Park. From the MCV Campus, the Egyptian Building has become the most visible landmark and symbol of the university's earliest history. Finally, the VCU Ram commemorates the university's school spirit and athletic accomplishments. Inside the ring, the neighboring James River is depicted, along with two stars signifying VCU's two Richmond campuses.

"This is a terrific milestone for VCU," says Reuban Rodriguez, Ph.D., associate vice provost and dean of student affairs at VCU. "An official school ring is a daily visible reminder to us and to others of what a fantastic institution we have."

The new ring made its debut in August and a special presentation ceremony for juniors and seniors will take place every October during Fall Fest.

Through May 2008, graduates who purchased a class ring from August 2006 to August 2007 may trade in their ring for one with the new design free of charge. Other alumni can trade their ring for a \$60 fee.

To view or purchase an official VCU class ring, or for more details on trading in your ring, visit the Jostens Web site at [www.jostens.com](http://www.jostens.com).



## DID YOU KNOW

More than 64,400 Monroe Park Campus alumni call Virginia home, with nearly 43,000 residing in the Richmond area. VCU Life Sciences has the largest percentage (86 percent) of alumni living and working in the state. The schools of Education and Engineering run a close second, each with 83 percent of their graduates located in the commonwealth.

**Ji Whan Kim** (B.S. '05/B) is a general ledger accountant for Lutheran Family Services in Raleigh, N.C.

**Kelly Lowe\*** (B.S. '03/B M.S. '04/B) has joined Dominion Enterprises as the new marketing manager for the equipment division with TraderOnline.com in Norfolk, Va.

**Debraj "Raj" Mukherjee** (B.S. '03/H&S) is enrolled in the Master of Public Health program at The Johns Hopkins University as a Sommer Scholar.

**Aleseia Saunders** (B.S. '03/B) is an acquisition specialist for the Defense Logistics Agency in Richmond, Va.

**Charles Watlington** (B.F.A. '02) is a designer for Ogilvy and Mather's Brand Integration Group in New York City. His clients include CNN, Avon and Coca-Cola.

**Desi Wyatt** (M.B.A. '00) earned the Financial Planning Associate designation and joined Smith Barney as a financial adviser.

## Faculty and staff

**Paul Ian Brown, Ph.D.**, associate professor in the Department of Biology, received a grant of more than \$880,000 from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Chesapeake Bay Targeted Watersheds Grant Program that will aid studies in oyster nutrients in aquaculture.

## Weddings

### 1990s

**Dwight Layne** (B.S. '92/H&S) married Melanie Boone on Sept. 2, 2006. They live in Richmond, Va.

**Gary Rule** (B.S. '93/E) married Heather Johnson on July 22, 2006. They live in Ashland, Va.

**John Sullivan** (M.B.A. '98) married Janet Schwartz on March 17, 2007. He is a principal of Mass Mutual Financial Services. They live in Glen Allen, Va.

**Patrick White** (B.S. '98/MC) married Jennifer Doyle on Aug. 19, 2006. They live in Richmond, Va.

### 2000s

**Brooke Arnold** (M.S. '06/H&S) married Wyatt Decker on Oct. 8, 2006. She is a data quality manager at Bank of America. They live in Charlotte, N.C.

**Elizabeth Blackwell** (B.S. '04/MC) married Taylor Stone on Sept. 9, 2006. She is an advertising specialist with Circuit City Stores Inc. They live in Richmond, Va.

**Dara Butler** (B.S. '05/H&S, M.T. '00) married Scott Geller on Aug. 5, 2006. She is a special education teacher in Henrico County. They live in Richmond, Va.

**Larry Cherry** (B.S. '03/H&S) married Tara Turner on March 31, 2007. They live in Chesterfield, Va.

# It's a great time to be a member!



**Membership in the VCU Alumni Association promotes a lifelong connection to VCU and offers a long list of benefits:**

- Yearly subscription to Shafer Court Connections.
- Low-cost Internet service through [online@VCU](mailto:online@VCU), VCU's hardware and software store.
- Alumni association window decal and membership card.
- Nationwide car and hotel discounts.
- International auto, hotel and air reservation service.
- Annual VCU Recreational Sports membership including use of university gyms and pools, equipment rentals and Outdoor Adventure Program trips (reduced fee).
- Playing privileges for the Thalhimer tennis courts.
- Opportunities to network with alumni at association-sponsored events.

- Discount on VCU merchandise at campus bookstores.
- Discount on tickets to VCU Athletics home events.
- Discount on event or meeting space rentals in the Richard T. Robertson Alumni House (life members only).
- Discounts on alumni association-sponsored events.
- VCU Alumni Association MasterCard.
- Participation in chapters.
- Group rates on medical insurance, life insurance and long-term care insurance.
- Customized VCU apparel.

**Start your annual membership in the VCU Alumni Association or African-American Alumni Council (includes VCUAAC membership) today for just \$35, or think big with a lifetime membership for \$350 (payment plans available). VCUAAC and AAAC membership dues are considered tax-deductible contributions.**

## Renew or join for life.

**VCU**

V i r g i n i a C o m m o n w e a l t h U n i v e r s i t y



## [CLASS NOTES]

**C. Ryan Emmons** (B.S. '04/En) married Elizabeth Wilson on Jan. 6, 2007. He works at Luck Stone Corp. They live in Glen Allen, Va.

**Laura Estep** (B.S. '02/B) married Trevor Atkins on March 24, 2007. They live in Chesterfield, Va.

**Courtney Green** (B.S. '06/H&S) married Kevin Jackson on July 1, 2006. They live in Richmond, Va.

**Krista Hutcherson** (B.S. '05/H&S) married William Keel II on Aug. 19, 2006.

**Kareem James** (B.S. '00/B) married Keishanna Morris (B.S. '01/MC) on Aug. 12, 2006. They live in Highland Springs, Va.

**Amanda Johnson** (B.S. '06/B) married Robert Nester on March 10, 2007. They live in Mechanicsville, Va.

**Kara Kihm** (Cert. '05/AHP, MSW '05) married Peter Wilson on Sept. 2, 2006. She works for Bon Secours as a hospice social worker. They live in Richmond, Va.

**Dean Lewis\*** (B.S. '05/H&S; B.S. '05/En) married Heather

**Kyle\*** (B.S. '05/En) on Aug. 5, 2006. He is pursuing his Ph.D. in computer architecture at Georgia Institute of Technology and she is a junior BIOS engineer with American Megatrends Inc. They live in Atlanta.

**Kelly Machett** (B.S. '00/B, M.S. '04/B) married J. Ryan Lowe on Sept. 17, 2006.

**Michael McKittrick, Ph.D.**, (B.S. '00/En) married Alexis Wrenn on Dec. 9, 2006. They live in Amherst, N.Y.

**Christopher Parker** (M.S. '06/E) married Anna Mullins (M.Ed. '05) on Aug. 26, 2006. They live in Eden, N.C.

**Jessica Pittman** (B.F.A. '04) married Charles Jones on April 27, 2006. They live in Richmond, Va.

**Matthew Ray** (B.S. '03/E) married Kate Jennings (B.S. '05/N) on Aug. 5, 2006. They live in Richmond, Va.

**Kellie Roche** (B.S. '05/B) married Matthew Cox on Aug. 26, 2006. They live in Mechanicsville, Va.

**Shelley Sabo** (B.S. '04/N, M.S. '05/N) married Matthew Smith on April 21, 2007. They live in Richmond, Va.

**Kelleigh Shepard** (B.S.W. '02) married Scott Ledgerwood on May 20, 2006. They live in Chesterfield, Va.

**Daniel Tassone, Ph.D.**, (B.S. '00/H&S, Pharm.D. '04) married Kimberly Kochan on Dec. 16, 2006. They live in Charlotte, N.C.

**Crisane Thomas** (B.A. '01/H&S) married Theodore Cook III on Sept. 2, 2006. They live in Richmond, Va.

**Sara Turpin** (B.S. '02/H&S, M.T. '02) married Michael Rowe on July 1, 2006. They live in St. Stephens Church, Va.

**Brandy Wade** (B.S. '00/H&S) married Kevin Morris on Feb. 17, 2007. They live in King William, Va.

**Alexander Weisz** (B.S. '03/B) married Jessica Amos on Aug. 6, 2006. He is a defense contractor for Defense Supply Center Richmond and a volunteer for Lakeside Rescue Squad.

**Amy Wyland** (B.S. '02/H&S, M.Ed. '04) married Jarrett Wilson on Dec. 30, 2006. They live in Richmond, Va.

**Jill Zebrowski** (B.S. '03/MC) married Marc Cichowicz on July 28, 2006.

## Births

### 1990s

**Bethany Mullin** (M.A. '92/B) gave birth to a baby girl, Avery, on Dec. 8, 2006, who joins sister, Lee, and brother, Lawton. She lives with her family in Columbus, Ga., and works as an instructor of economics at Chattahoochee Valley College.

**Deborah Sauri** (B.F.A. '93) gave birth to her first child, Kamryn Leigh Sauri, on Oct. 15, 2006. She lives in Arlington, Va., with her daughter and husband Michael.

**Nina Sims\*** (B.S. '93/MC) gave birth to Nathan LaMar on Sept. 28, 2006. She lives in Richmond, Va., with husband LaMar (B.S. '06/H&S) and daughters Lauryn and Kendall.

**Joy Voith** (B.A. '95/H&S) gave birth to her first child, Ryerson, in October 2005. She lives in Seattle with her husband and works for Microsoft.

**John Winn** (B.M. '93, M.M. '95) and his wife, Susanna Klein, welcomed son, Raif Solomon, on March 14, 2006. He joins older brother Killian.

## Obituaries

### 1930s

**Alice Alrich** (B.S. '35/H&S), of Spotsylvania, Va., Jan. 30, 2007, at age 95. She became the first superintendent of public welfare in Spotsylvania County in 1937. She also served as the director of the Spotsylvania Department of Social Services from 1972 until 1979.

## Spotlight

### Cancer survivor serves as a model for other young women

After leaving a lifetime of scars and a painful breast reconstruction process, Melissa Goodwin Horwitz (M.S.W. '01) is whole again. Today, the 36-year-old North Carolina former child advocacy specialist works to educate young women about breast reconstruction through her organization, *Together Again*, and a photographic documentary of her same name that chronicles her journey.

"I want women to know that you can look good again and feel good again in your clothing," says Horwitz. Diagnosed with breast cancer three years ago, Horwitz came up short in her search for photos of her reconstruction process, or even before-and-after images of women her age.

So the patient became the model, and with the help of photojournalist Missy McDaniel, Horwitz documented her experience, shot by shot. Three women launched the M7A project in the summer of 2005. The following spring, with the backing of Spotsylvania House Cancer Support Center in Chapel Hill, N.C., and a one-year grant from the NC Triangle Alliance of Susan G. Komen for the Cure, the dramatic black-and-white series debuted in print.

Horwitz's grassroots efforts to land the 32-page booklet in doctor's offices, hospitals and cancer centers throughout North Carolina drew attention from Raleigh's *News & Observer*, local National Public Radio and even the "Today" show. "When the story came out in *The News & Observer*, we had 1,000 Web visits and when we were on HBO we had 600 Web visits," Horwitz says. "Within a matter of months, even doctors — who we thought would be our biggest challenge because what doctor would want to put another woman's mark in their office? — were asking for the booklet."

The North Carolina doctors and medical community have breathed so much life into the project, says Horwitz. Now, she's looking to replicate the success she's had in her home state elsewhere.

"I'd like to meet a breast cancer survivor in Oklahoma who has to go through breast reconstruction to have this resource," she says. "God, I just want the project to soar. I would love it to already make its way to over a million of them."

To see the booklet or Missy McDaniel's *Together Again*, or to purchase the booklet, visit [www.togetheragain.org](http://www.togetheragain.org).





Stephen R. Adkins Sr. (B.S., '74/B)  
 Olujimi Ajijola (B.S. '74/B)  
 Benjamin R. Allen (B.S. '92/B)  
 Anthony L. Anderson (A.S. '70/En)  
 Timothy A. Anderson (B.S. '80/H&S)  
 Ntoh Atem-Tambe (M.S. '05/En)  
 Laura Stirton Aust (B.F.A. '77)  
 Alexander C. Baer (B.F.A. '70)  
 Shirley S. Barker (B.S. '82/B)  
 Mary C. Bartelt (B.F.A. '67)  
 Anthony R. Bedell  
 Rosanna L. Bencovich (M.P.A. '95)  
 Kristen E. Biggers (B.S. '04/H&S)  
 Richard E. Blair (B.S. '93/En)  
 Robin J. Blandford (M.B.A. '83)  
 Dr. Fred C. Bolton Jr. (Ph.D. '02/H&S)  
 Barry J. Bomboy (M.B.A. '80)  
 Pamela K. Bomboy (M.Ed. '81)  
 John R. Boothby (M.S.W. '77)  
 Pauline S. Boxley (M.Ed. '88)  
 William C. Boyce Jr. (B.S. '73/H&S)  
 Carl Andrew Branch Sr.  
 Sylvestine Pat Branch (B.A. '06/H&S)  
 David B. Browe (B.S. '70/B)  
 Donna J. Browe (B.S. '70/B)  
 Carolyn D. Brown (B.S. '79/B)  
 Dr. Frank L. Brown Jr. (M.B.A. '01)  
 Stephanie Brown  
 Dennis Burrus (B.S. '07/H&S)  
 Alton M. Butler Jr. (B.S. '98/B)  
 Hudson L. Byrd III (B.S. '91/B)  
 Kathleen V. Caffrey (M.Ed. '81)  
 Julia M. Cain (B.S. '01/En)  
 Nicholas E. Cain (B.S. '01/En)  
 Harvey E. Chambers (B.S. '82/MC)  
 Jane C. Chandler (B.S. '66/E)  
 Ronald H. Chandler (B.S. '59/MC)  
 Donna Lou W. Clarke (B.S. '86/B)  
 Robert E. Clay (B.A. '93/H&S)  
 Carolyn L. Clemente (B.S. '73/MC)  
 Barbara B. Cockburn (B.S. '62/E)  
 John G. Colan (B.S. '72/B)  
 Kenneth L. Cortright Jr. (B.S. '75/MC)  
 Nicki W. Cortright (B.S. '75/E)  
 Antonia Jane Couleman (B.F.A. '68)  
 Brian M. Crewe (B.S. '94/B)  
 Linda Crewe  
 Patricia B. Cushnie (B.S. '70/N)  
 Brian K. Davis (B.S. '86/H&S)  
 W. Lauraine Davis (B.A. '84/H&S)  
 Dr. Harold F. Demsko (B.S. '81/H&S)  
 David R. Dennier (B.S. '75/B)  
 Maureen O'Haire Dingus (B.S. '90/MC)  
 Stephen C. Dingus (B.A. '91/H&S)  
 Hunter Nelson Dominick (B.F.A. '96)  
 David J. Domster (B.S. '85/B)  
 Sue S. Donaldson (B.S. '71/E)  
 Carolyn E. Duckworth (B.F.A. '76)  
 J. Chris Earley (B.F.A. '98)  
 Sandra Earley  
 Randolph D. Eley Jr. (B.S. '70/B)  
 James A. Estep (B.S. '04/En)  
 Nancy C. Everett (B.S. '78/B)  
 Linda L. Ferrell (M.A. '84/A)  
 Faye W. Forbes (B.S. '54/MC)  
 Kateresca L. Ford (B.S. '96/H&S)  
 Quo Vadis Ford  
 Donald G. Frost (B.S. '73/B)  
 H. Lewis Garrett (B.C.S. '84/H&S)  
 Joan Loren Gaustad (B.F.A. '76)  
 Deborah Prince Gibball (B.S. '79/H&S)

Barbara E. Gibson (B.S. '72/MC)  
 Harold L. Giles (B.S. '91/H&S)  
 Floyd J. Glidewell (B.S. '69/H&S)  
 Dr. Chesley S. Goldston II (M.S. '86/H&S)  
 Rebecca M. Goshorn (M.Ed. '94)  
 Rachel A. Grace (B.S. '73/E)  
 Diana L. Gross-Bendall (B.S. '95/B)  
 William K. Hammack (B.S. '67/E)  
 Andrew T. Harris III (B.S. '99/B)  
 Angelica E. Bega Hart (B.A. '01/H&S)  
 Daniel C. Hart (B.A. '01/H&S)  
 John E. Hayek (M.S. '78/AHP)  
 Melissa Beth Hays-Smith (M.S.W. '82)  
 Michael L. Hill (B.S. '78/E)  
 Dr. Oakley Norman Holmes Jr. (M.A./A)  
 Eleanor R. Hoskins (M.S.W. '06)  
 Barbara C. Howson (M.Ed. '03)  
 Rhonda L. Hoyle (A.S. '88/AHP)  
 Lee E. Huffman (B.F.A. '73)  
 Andrew C. Hulcher (B.S. '84/B)  
 Peter E. Imhof (M.F.A. '05/H&S)  
 Ernest B. Irby Jr. ('71/MC)  
 Margie C. Irby (B.S. '91/B)  
 Elizabeth F. Jarrard (M.Ed. '82)  
 Edriene Johnson-Butcher (B.S. '73/H&S)  
 Eric A. Johnston (B.S. '97/B)  
 Alan W. Jones Jr. (B.S. '92/B)  
 Charlotte C. Jones (B.S. '93/N)  
 Michelle D. Jones (B.S. '87/H&S)  
 Karen S. Kettinger (B.S. '99/B)  
 B. Carroll Kincaid (B.S. '69/H&S)  
 Joyce B. Kincaid (B.G.S. '80/H&S)  
 Carolyn M. King (B.S.W. '83)  
 Johnny A. Kitts (M.P.A. '83)  
 William M. Koehler Jr. (B.S. '01/B)  
 Michael W. Koontz (M.S. '98/B)  
 Beverly P. Leonard (M.S. '90/AHP)  
 Charles L. Leonard (B.S. '63/H&S)  
 Gary M. Levison (M.S. '75/H&S)  
 Ruth K. Levison  
 Deborah S. Little (B.S. '97/B)  
 Vicki R. Livingston (B.F.A. '63)  
 Donald Louie (B.S. '72/H&S)  
 G. David Magill (B.S. '58/E)  
 Craig M. Martin (M.B.A. '91)  
 Joan N. Martin (A.S. '71/B)  
 Dr. Jane Massey-Redd (M.Ed. '78)  
 David H. Mawyer (B.S. '05/En)  
 Daylon S. McCarty (B.S. '94/H&S)  
 Allan P. McLearn (B.S. '74/B)  
 Mary L. McLearn (B.S. '75/E)  
 Frank B. Mitchell (B.S. '72/B)  
 Jacques P. Monteran (B.S. '80/E)  
 Carole E. Morck (Cert. '59/A)  
 Elizabeth N. Morgan (B.F.A. '05)  
 John D. Morgan (B.S. '98/H&S)  
 Patricia B. Morgan (B.S. '71/E)  
 Keith G. Morse (B.S. '90/H&S)  
 Donald E. Mosman Jr. (M.B.A. '92)  
 Thomas Moyer III (B.S. '86/B)  
 Catherine A. Mueller (B.S. '87/B)  
 Thomas C. Mulvin (B.S. '93/B)  
 Paul J. Murman Jr. (B.S. '74/B)  
 Donna J. Navarro (B.S. '00/B)  
 M. Pinson Neal III (B.A. '88/H&S)  
 Tina Kohn Neal (M.A. '92/B)  
 DeLoane W. Newman (B.S. '76/B)  
 Allison K. Obershaw (B.A. '01/H&S)  
 Cupid Ojala (B.F.A. '99)  
 Jacquelin Harmon Olbert (B.A. '86/H&S)  
 Tammy E. Parece (B.I.S. '06/H&S)

Carol McCall Patterson (B.S. '83/A)  
 Rev. Graham M. Patterson (M.S. '01/AHP)  
 Eugene H. Payne (B.S. '59)  
 Michael S. Peasley (B.S. '95/H&S)  
 Nicole R. Peasley (B.S.W. '94)  
 Dr. Marcia Penn (B.S. '72/SW)  
 George R. Peterson (Cert. '94/H&S)  
 James M. Pitts (B.S. '71/B)  
 W. Larry Powell (B.S. '85/MC)  
 J. Douglas Pridgen Jr. (B.S. '79/B)  
 Joyce M. Pritchard (B.S. '70/E)  
 Michael D. Pritchard (B.S. '68/B)  
 Marcus Rediker (B.A. '77/H&S)  
 Justin T. Reed (B.S. '01/B)  
 Peter L. Rikard (B.S. '77/B)  
 Susan W. Rikard (B.S. '86/MC)  
 Jacqueline L. Roberts (B.S. '78/E)  
 Larry Thomas Roberts  
 Madeline B. Roberts (B.S.W. '04)  
 Dr. Reuban Rodriguez  
 Suzanne Rodriguez  
 Douglas S. Rogers  
 Marilyn Cox Rooney (B.A. '72/H&S)  
 Dr. Fred P. Rosen (B.S. '74/H&S)  
 Rachael Rossmeissl (B.S. '07/H&S)  
 Dr. Ernst M. Schubert (M.S. '79/H&S)  
 Lynn Payne Schug (B.S. '83/H&S)  
 Allison E. Sharpe-Peterson (B.A. '85/H&S)  
 Thomas A. Sheets (B.S. '95/B)  
 Dr. Robert R. Siegel (M.Ed. '71)  
 Benjamin D. Sillmon III (B.S. '86/B)  
 Vivian E. Sillmon (M.S. '94/B)  
 Dr. Adelaide W. Simpson (M.S. '80/H&S)  
 Norma V. Simpson (B.S. '69/E)  
 David P. Singer (M.S.W. '95)  
 Troy D. Small (B.S. '06/H&S)  
 Kenneth S. Smith Jr. (B.S. '03/H&S)  
 Bonnie Steffey  
 E. Garrison Steffey Jr. (B.S. '69/E)  
 Tracy R. Stevens (B.S. '00/B)  
 Casey S. Stewart (B.F.A. '06)  
 Stephen K. Struder (B.S. '84/B)  
 James A. Stygar (B.F.A. '66)  
 Dr. Mary R. Sudzina (B.S. '70/E)  
 Michael Sullivan (M.S. '01/B)  
 Patricia A. Sunko-Imhof  
 Gregory P. Swanson (B.S. '81/MC)  
 Trang D. Ta (B.S. '97/H&S)  
 Sheila Y. Tapscott (M.T. '95)  
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 Jo C. Vaden (B.A. '02/H&S)  
 Linda E. Vernon (B.S. '83/AHP)  
 William R. Vernon (Cert. '84/B)  
 Adam D. Walger (B.A. '04/H&S)  
 Frederick B. Wayne (B.A. '70/H&S)  
 Romany Sear Wilkinson (M.S.W. '70)  
 Frank A. Williams Jr. (B.S. '79/H&S)  
 Gerald L. Witt (B.S. '73/E)  
 Barbara A. Wright (B.S. '70/E)  
 Brandon Edward Wysowski (B.S. '07/H&S)  
 Walter J. Zenda (M.B.A. '80)  
 Stephen R. Zentmeyer (B.S. '70/H&S)  
 Gary D. Zwicker (M.B.A. '78)

*List includes individuals who joined the VCU Alumni Association or the African-American Alumni Council as lifetime members between July 1, 2006, and June 30, 2007.*

## 1940s

**Elizabeth Mitchell** (B.S. '44/B), of Lynchburg, Va., April 29, 2007, at age 86.

## 1950s

**Lillian Atkinson** (B.S. '51/B), of Charlottesville, Va., Oct. 21, 2006, at age 83.

**Edgar Barnhill Jr., Ph.D.**, (B.S. '51/B), of Ventura, Calif., March 15, 2007, at age 80.

**Emile Cahen Jr.**, of Richmond, Va., Jan. 26, 2007. He retired as the art director of the Richmond Times-Dispatch and was a well-known artist.

**William Heywood** (B.F.A. '52), of Richmond, Va., March 9, 2007, at age 79.

**Mary Jo Krueger** (B.S. '51/E), of Richmond, Va., Sept. 10, 2006, at age 77. She was a social worker for Richmond Public Schools and the director of psychiatric social work services for Tucker Hospital.

**Julian "Junnie" Latimer Jr.** (B.S. '51/B), of Richmond, Va., June 28, 2006, at age 82.

**Frances Leopold** (B.S. '51/H&S), of Carmel, Ind., Aug. 30, 2006.

**Leslie "Bud" Long Jr.** (B.S. '52/B), of Midlothian, Va., April 20, 2007, at age 78. He founded Long Advertising Agency.

**John "Jack" McLean** (B.S. '50/B), of Richmond, Va., May 7, 2007.

**Aubrey Shuler** (B.S. '57/B), of Hopewell, Va., Feb. 20, 2007, at age 71. He was a retired auditor for the Virginia Department of Transportation.

**Lucy Smith** (B.S. '57/H&S, M.Ed. '73), of Richmond, Va., Jan. 20, 2007, at age 89. She was a teacher for 38 years in Richmond Public Schools, Highland, Henrico and Chesterfield county schools.

**Caroline Wiley** (B.S. '52/E), of Petersburg, Va., Aug. 12, 2006, at age 76.

## Spotlight

### Twenty-year-old rap song turns into classroom history lesson

**Saryn Hatcher**, Ed.D., (B.A. '94/A) grew up in the 1980s when hip-hop music first began. Living in the Bronx, he was surrounded by the music he considered pure. He grew to love the new sounds and beats. But his father had a different opinion.

"My father was very strict so I couldn't really get into that lifestyle," Hatcher says. "I really liked that sound and it stayed with me."

His father didn't stop him from participating in rap battles with classmates at school and then later in the Navy. At 19 years old Hatcher walked into a recording studio in Jacksonville, Fla., where he was stationed, and seven hours later walked out with his own recorded rap song.

"Fifty Black People That We Should Know" was accompanied with an old-school hip-hop beat and the words rang more like a history lesson.

"I wanted to make music that meant something," he says.

Growing up, Hatcher used to write book reports for his father, chronicling different black people. He decided to rehash those reports and make it into a song.

"I wanted to give back to all the people who did so much for the African-American people," Hatcher says. "I chose people who I thought were interesting and very influential. I started doing research and one person led to another."

After trying unsuccessfully to get his song played on the radio, he eventually put it away.

Twenty years have now passed, as has Hatcher's dream of becoming a rap star.

Now he is a junior high school principal and decided to revisit his original song and give it a different twist. Hatcher re-recorded it in a spoken word format instead of a rap beat.

"I wanted others to listen to the message, not the messenger," says Hatcher. "Now it has a more universal feel for young and old."

Teachers at Hatcher's school use "Fifty Black People That We Should Know" in their classrooms.

The VCU alumnus hopes that someday his song and message will be turned into a PBS special, profiling influential black people.

But what does his father think about the book reports that turned into a rap song and now turned into a teaching tool in Florida classrooms?

"He is proud of me, but said I still owe him one more book report," Hatcher says.

To listen to Hatcher's song visit <http://cdbaby.com/cd/sarynlhatcher>.



## 1960s

**Mary Arrington** (M.S.W. '67), of Broadway, Va., Sept. 11, 2006, at age 89. She retired after 36 years as director of the Virginia Department of Social Services.

**John Bevell** (M.Ed. '65), of Boynton, Va., Oct. 9, 2006, at age 74. He was president of John D. Bevell Inc. Insurance Agency since 1959.

**James Cooley** (B.S. '68/B), of Frederick, Md., Oct. 22, 2006, at age 68. He retired from Humble Oil/Exxon after 27 years.

**Dominick DeMarco Sr.** (B.S. '63/B), of Richmond, Va., Oct. 14, 2006, at age 79. He retired from the U.S. Postal Service after 40 years.

**James FitzPatrick** (B.S. '62/B), of Leonardtown, Md., Nov. 8, 2006, at age 70. He worked as controller for international operations from Invensys Controls Co. for 35 years, retiring in 2000.

**Calvin Harrison** (B.S. '60/B), of Midlothian, Va., Jan. 9, 2007, at age 84. He worked for E.I. duPont de Nemours for 34 years.

**Thomas Hawthorne Sr.** (B.S. '60/B), of Virginia Beach, Va., Jan. 11, 2007, at age 68. He retired as a wage and hour compliance officer for the federal government after 20 years.

**Horace Hill** ('60/B), of Richmond, Va., Feb. 18, 2007, at age 78. He retired after 35 years as a technician with W.G. Specks Inc. Heating and Cooling.

**Phyllis Houser** (B.F.A. '65), of Richmond, Va., March 26, 2007, at age 84. She retired as the director of statewide services at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

**Doris Kizer** (B.S. '68/E), of Richmond, Va., Aug. 23, 2006, at age 83. She was a retired teacher from Chesterfield County schools.

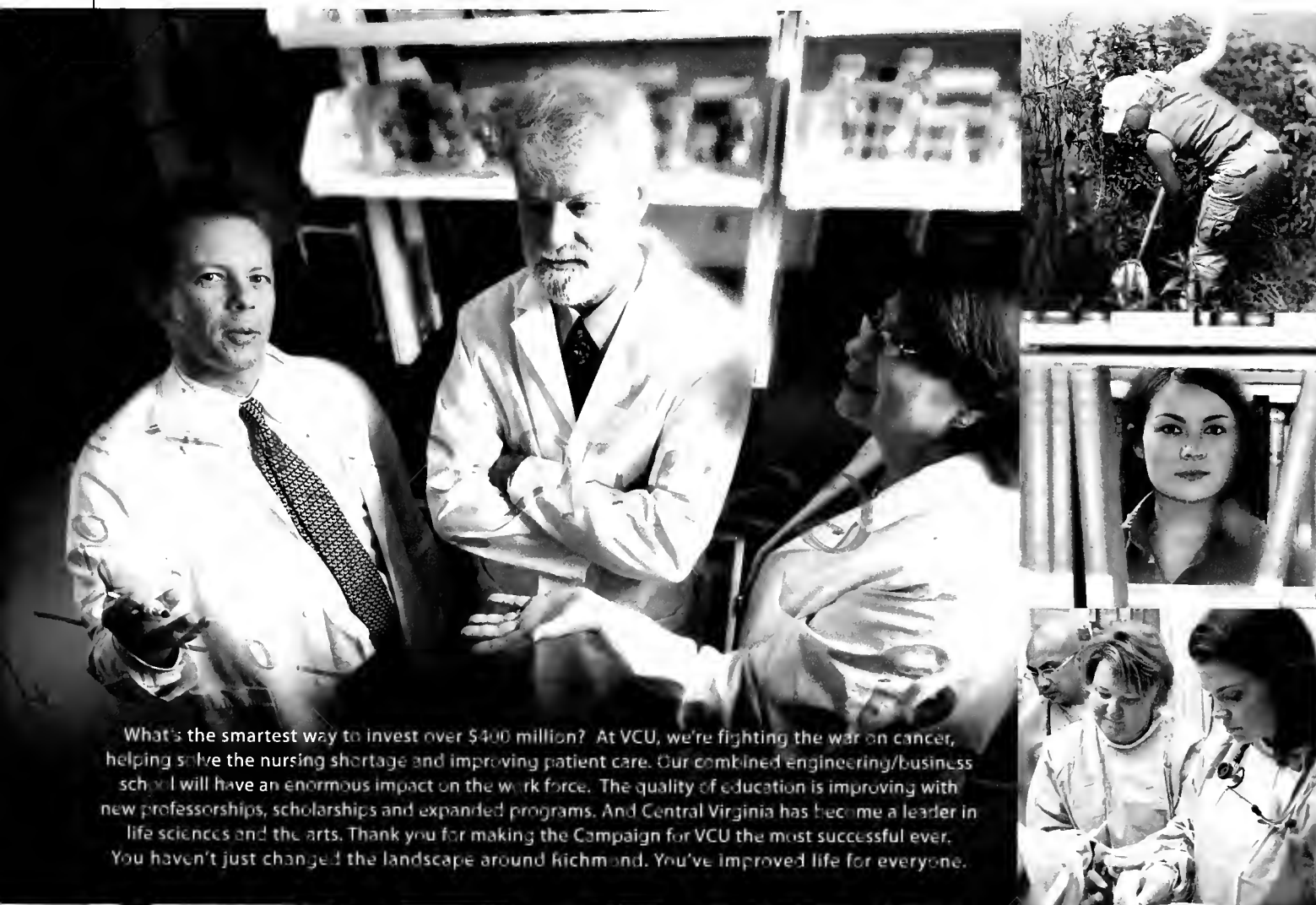
**Donald Kniesche** (A.S. '69/B), of Montpelier, Va., Feb. 4, 2007, at age 71.

**Richard Kraus** (M.H.A. '64), of Midlothian, Va., Oct. 28, 2006, at age 70. He was the first CEO of Chippenham Medical Center.

**Lt. Col. Virgil Mansfield** (B.S. '65/B, M.S. '66/E), of Ocala, Fla., April 14, 2007. He retired after 20 years in the U.S. Army and became a VCU professor until 1976.

**Richard "Dick" Meador** (B.S. '62/B), of Waynesboro, Va., Aug. 31, 2006, at age 66. He was senior vice president and regional agency manager for BB&T Insurance Services. He was a delegate in 1985 to the White House Conference on Small Business, a member of the 1986 Inaugural Committee for the Governor of Virginia, and served on the VCU Board of Visitors.

Your contributions didn't just make this university a better place for learning.  
**You made the world a better place for living.**



What's the smartest way to invest over \$400 million? At VCU, we're fighting the war on cancer, helping solve the nursing shortage and improving patient care. Our combined engineering/business school will have an enormous impact on the work force. The quality of education is improving with new professorships, scholarships and expanded programs. And Central Virginia has become a leader in life sciences and the arts. Thank you for making the Campaign for VCU the most successful ever. You haven't just changed the landscape around Richmond. You've improved life for everyone.



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V i r g i n i a C o m m o n w e a l t h U n i v e r s i t y

## VCU Alumni Association

### VCUAA officers

C. Dandridge Massey, C.M.B. (B.S. '92/B), president  
Donna M. Dalton (M.Ed. '00), president-elect  
Patricia E. Green (M.S.W. '74), secretary  
Kenneth "Ken" A. Thomas (B.S. '91/B), treasurer  
Jo Lynne S. DeMary (M.Ed. '72), immediate past president  
Thomas H. Beatty (B.A. '93/H&S), officer-at-large

### School alumni board chairs

Steven B. Brincefield, C.P.M., (M.S. '74/B),  
School of Business

### Board of Directors

#### Term expiring 2008

Robert A. Almond (B.S. '74/E; M.S. '85/E)  
Elizabeth J. Moran (M.P.A. '92)  
Jacqueline Tunstall-Bynum (B.S. '82/H&S)

#### Term expiring 2009

Peter A. Blake (B.A. '80/H&S; M.S. '88/MC)  
Suzette P. Denslow (B.S. '79/H&S)  
Irvin "Jack" Farmer (B.S. '69/B), presidential appointment  
William R. O'Connell Jr. (B.E.M. '55)  
Thomas A. Silvestri (M.B.A. '86)  
Patricia I. Wright (M.Ed. '84)

#### Term expiring 2010

Rejena G. Carreras (B.F.A. '70; M.A.E. '80)  
William L. Davis (B.S. '74/B; M.S. '79/H&S)  
David R. Dennier (B.S. '75/B)  
Stephanie L. Holt (B.S. '74/H&S)  
Gary M. Inman (M.A. '93/A)  
Stephen H. Jones (B.S. '75/B)  
Shirley R. McDaniel (B.G.S. '99/H&S)  
Mary E. Perkinson (B.F.A. '91; B.S. '03/En)  
John J. Schwartz (B.S. '69/B)  
Vickie M. Snead (B.S. '76/B)

### African-American Alumni Council

Franklin Wallace (B.F.A. '87), president  
Joseph Tyner (M.S. '92/B), treasurer  
Mary Francis (B.S. '95/H&S), secretary  
Rodney Harry (B.S. '90/H&S), parliamentarian  
Edward Robinson Jr. (B.G.S. '00/H&S;  
M.S.W. '03), VCUAA representative

### Young Alumni Council

Gaurav "G" Shrestha (B.S. '03/B), president

Caroll Obaugh ('62/B), of Richmond, Va., Jan. 15, 2007, at age 71. He worked as an executive for Ukrop's for 26 years. He also was a board member for the Central Virginia Foodbank.

Leonard Perks Jr. (B.S. '67/B), of Lively, Va., May 16, 2006.

Clifford "Mike" Pocklington (B.S. '69/MC), of Richmond, Va., April 4, 2007, at age 64. He was a commercial photographer for more than 25 years.

Morton Rudnick (B.S. '69/B), of Richmond, Va., Aug. 17, 2006, at age 59.

Edith Shaffer (B.S. '67/SW), of Richmond, Va., Aug. 7, 2006.

Henry Steinruck (A.S. '67/En), of Chesterfield, Va., Jan. 9, 2007, at age 59.

James Taylor (B.F.A. '69), of Snow Hill, Md., Aug. 16, 2006, at age 84. He retired in 1979 as the director of rehabilitation therapies at Eastern Shore State Hospital in Cambridge, Md.

Page Traylor (M.Ed. '68), of Chester, Va., Nov. 30, 2006, at age 66. She was a member of faculties at Colonial Heights Middle School in Colonial Heights, and Providence Middle School and Thomas Dale High School in Chesterfield County.

Wallace White (B.S. '66/B), of Stuarts Draft, Va., Nov. 12, 2006, at age 67.

## 1970s

Edwana Bennett (B.S. '75/H&S), of Charlottesville, Va., Sept. 7, 2005, at age 54. She was a teacher at Buford Middle School, an adult education teacher and a counselor at Region Ten.

Jon Blackwell (B.S. '77/E), of Richmond, Va., Sept. 9, 2006, at age 55. He was a HPL production supervisor for more than 14 years for Qubica AMF.

Henry "Bill" Brown (M.Ed. '75, M.B.A. '78; M.S. '90/AHP), formerly of Greenville, N.C., Feb. 9, 2007. He was a Navy veteran and previously worked for HCA, Richmond Memorial Hospital, and was a math teacher at the Richmond Home for Boys.

Laverne Davis (M.Ed. '75), of Richmond, Va., Aug. 16, 2006. She retired from Richmond Public Schools after 34 years of teaching.

Helen Dorsk (B.S. '74/E; M.Ed. '82), of Richmond, Va., Sept. 21, 2006. She taught in Henrico County Public Schools from 1974 to 1980.

Alice Ford (B.S. '78/H&S), of Varina, Va., Sept. 30, 2006, at age 78.

Susan Gerner (B.F.A. '73), of Stow, Mass., Nov. 12, 2006.

Berkley Graham (B.S. '71/E), of Mechanicsville, Va., Dec. 7, 2006, at age 59. She worked as a teacher and director of the New Hanover Presbyterian Church preschool program.

Eugene "Gene" Grumbine Jr. (B.S. '70/H&S), of Glen Allen, Va., Aug. 25, 2006. He worked for the state crime lab for more than 30 years.

Eva Gulyas (B.S. '74/H&S), of Richmond, Va., Feb. 7, 2007.

George "Randy" Humrickhouse Jr. (B.S. '70/H&S; M.S. '74/H&S), of Wytheville, Va., April 23, 2007, at age 61.

Stanley Lewis ('70/B), of Hartfield, Va., Dec. 25, 2006, at age 65. He served as the commissioner of the revenue of Middlesex County for 23 years. He also was a founding member of the Kiwanis Club in Middlesex.

Vivien Lohmeyer (B.S. '73/H&S), of Pottstown, Pa., Jan. 26, 2007, at age 86. She was an administrative assistant for Reynolds Aluminum Corporation for 36 years, retiring in 1986.

Sally McConnaughey (B.A. '73/H&S), of Amelia, Va., Aug. 23, 2006. She studied law at the University of Mississippi, received her Juris Doctor and practiced law in Amelia County.

Joan Elaine Nelms (B.F.A. '71), of Marshall, Va., Sept. 5, 2006, at age 57.

Elsa Porte (B.S. '77/E), of Richmond, Va., April 25, 2007, at age 83. She was a teacher for more than 40 years.

Lorraine Pulley (B.S. '76/E), of Mechanicsville, Va., Aug. 24, 2006.

Freda Rollings (M.Ed. '74), of Moseley, Va., Dec. 20, 2006, at age 71. She retired from Chesterfield County Schools, having been a teacher and counselor for 40 years.

Nellie Scott (B.S. '79/H&S), of Powhatan, Va., Nov. 25, 2006, at age 66.

Thomas Scott (B.S. '71/B), of Washington, D.C., Nov. 8, 2006.

Randolph "Randy" Shipman (B.S. '74/E, M.Ed. '82), of Walkerton, Va., Feb. 25, 2007, at age 60. He was a teacher and worked with the mentally and physically handicapped.

Rosa Tapscott (M.Ed. '78), of Richmond, Va., Aug. 27, 2006, at age 62. She retired in 2003 as the associate director of early childhood education for Hanover County public schools.

Timothy Trusdell (B.A. '72/H&S), of Richmond, Va., Jan. 13, 2007, at age 62.

Dante Umbi (B.S. '73/B), of Richmond, Va., Dec. 13, 2006, at age 83. He worked as a tax examiner for the Virginia Department of Taxation until 2004.

## 1980s

Clara Akinleye (B.S. '81/B), of Richmond, Va., Dec. 4, 2006, at age 50.

Carolyn Bond (B.F.A. '89), of Richmond, Va., Feb. 17, 2007, at age 64. She was a life member in the Beta Sigma Phi sorority and worked for C&P Telephone Co., Timmons Group, and H.C. Yu and Associates.

Steven Forssenius (B.S. '84/H&S), of Palm Springs, Calif., Aug. 25, 2006, at age 47.

Linda Howard-Lazarus (B.A. '89/H&S), of San Antonio, Texas, July 26, 2006, at age 39.

Stephen Meredith (B.S. '89/B), of Richmond, Va., Sept. 18, 2006, at age 45. He was a CPA and started his own business where he served clients for more than 20 years.

William "Bill" Shelor III (B.S. '89/B), of Atlanta, Dec. 20, 2006, at age 39.

Thomas Smailes III (B.F.A. '89), of Chesterfield, Va., Dec. 28, 2006 at age 41. He worked as a sound technician.

Albert Smith Jr. (B.S. '83/H&S; B.S. '83/B), formerly of Richmond, Va., March 18, 2007, at age 72.

## 1990s

Geraldine Bridger (B.G.S. '98/H&S), of Chester, Va., April 21, 2007, at age 54. She was a retired scientist with Philip Morris.

Craig Brumback (B.S. '96/B), of Charlottesville, Va., Aug. 9, 2006, at age 40. He was the co-owner of Alanbach Construction Co.

Lisa Knott (B.S. '90/E), of Roswell, Ga., Sept. 19, 2006.

William Lee (B.S. '95/B), of Madison Heights, Va., April 3, 2007, at age 52.

Stacey Sprenkle (B.F.A. '90), of Richmond, Va., Oct. 4, 2006, at age 38. She worked in pharmaceutical sales with Schering-Plough and Ethicon Endo-Surgery Inc.

## 2000s

Mary Elizabeth Brooks (B.S. '05/H&S), of Richmond, Va., Sept. 13, 2006, at age 24. She worked for the Henrico County School System and was a member of Trinity United Methodist Church.

Jonathan Zanin (B.S. '03/B), of Richmond, Va., May 7, 2007. "Jonny Z" was an activist, artist and musician. For the past two years had organized fundraisers for the city's FoodNotBombs group, which feeds the community in Monroe Park.

## Faculty and staff

Alden Bigelow, of Charlottesville, Va., Dec. 12, 2006, at age 88. He taught 25 years in the Department of History at VCU. Upon his retirement he was made professor emeritus at VCU and a scholarship was established in his honor.



## WHAT'S NEW?

Shafer Court Connections welcomes updates on job changes, marriages, relocations — whatever is newsworthy. Help us keep track of you by sending your news to:

**shafercourt@vcu.edu**

## Show spirit! VCU black and gold

Quality polos, Tommy Hilfiger apparel, sweatshirts, oxfords, outerwear, ladies apparel, bags, hats and fan packs are available online. Buy for yourself or give a gift to a friend; shop the Virginia Commonwealth University merchandise store at [www.clubcolors.com/vcu](http://www.clubcolors.com/vcu).

VCU Alumni Association members receive 10 percent off all orders. Call (804) 828-2586 to get your online promotion code.

*The online merchandise store is brought to you by a partnership between VCU Alumni Association and Campus Casuals by Club Colors.*



Virginia Commonwealth University

## VCU School of Engineering mourns death of associate dean

Barton B. Cregger, who helped guide the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Engineering through its infancy and served as its unofficial "dean of students," died March 27, 2007. He was 49.

"Bart's loss to us is immeasurable," says Russell D. Jamison, Ph.D., School of Engineering dean. "He did everything involving counseling, advising, encouraging and cajoling undergraduate students in the School of Engineering and was in that sense the head cheerleader and parent figure for many of our students."

Cregger completed his bachelor's and master's degrees at the University of Virginia, where he studied under Robert J. Mattauch, former dean of the VCU School of Engineering. Mattauch recruited Cregger to VCU in 1998 as an assistant professor in the department of electrical engineering.

"Bart was a truly exceptional friend and colleague who was devoted to the School of Engineering and wanted the very best for each and every student," Mattauch says. "As associate dean he got the job done with the greatest accuracy, in the least amount of time and always with attention to the feelings of the people involved."

"These are characteristics he has exhibited since he was a student of mine," Mattauch says. "Bart has been a part of my family for nearly 30 years, and my wife and I will miss him greatly."

A scholarship has been established in Cregger's memory.



## Architect of School of Social Work Ph.D. program passes

Martin Adler, Ph.D., who helped develop Virginia Commonwealth University's School of Social Work doctorate program, died Nov. 30, 2006. He was 78.

According to the Richmond Times-Dispatch, "Adler was a nationally known developer of social work doctorate programs when VCU tapped him in 1975 to come to Richmond. He retired in 1995."

The Newark, N.J., native found his avocation early, working with social conflict-resolution issues in high school. After earning a bachelor's degree at Rutgers University, he served in the Korean War. ... After the war, Adler earned master's and doctoral degrees in sociology from the University of Pittsburgh, where he became chairman of that school of social work's doctoral program."

## VCU alumnus and Online@VCU manager Allan Brooks dies

Allan E. Brooks (B.S. '73/B), a longtime Virginia Commonwealth University employee, died July 11, 2007, at age 57. As a student at VCU in the early 1970s, Brooks served as chairman of the VCU Concert and Dance Committee, bringing Kenny Rogers, Alice Cooper, the Beach Boys and many other prominent acts to campus.

In the fall of 1990, Brooks returned to VCU as manager of the then Academic Campus Bookstore (now the e<sup>2</sup> Bookstore). He also managed the Fan Fair store, providing VCU gifts and apparel in the University Student Commons. More recently, Brooks managed VCU's technology store, Online@VCU.

"In every assignment, he was dedicated to serving students, faculty and staff," says Dan McDonald, assistant director, VCU Business Services. "Virginia Commonwealth University has lost a loyal and loving member of the university community," McDonald adds. "Allan will be missed by his many friends and colleagues at VCU."





# Obituaries

## 'Dr. Wally,' longtime management professor at VCU, dies

Wallace Johnston, D.B.A., a management professor at Virginia Commonwealth University and a well-known workplace commentator, died May 17, 2007, from cancer at the age of 69.

Johnston taught at VCU from 1971 to 1996, retiring as an associate professor emeritus. As a teacher, he specialized in the areas of administrative theory, organizational behavior and communications.

E.G. Miller, Ph.D., senior associate dean for the School of Business, says Johnston was a demanding teacher who had a profound impact on his students.

"He became an important mentor to a lot of his students," Miller says. "And that mentorship would often carry over after they left VCU."

After retirement, Johnston, who was known as "Dr. Wally," wrote columns on work and workplace issues that were carried in the Richmond Times-Dispatch, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch and were syndicated to 16 other newspapers. His commentaries could be heard on Public Radio, WCVE 88.9 FM, twice a week.

He was also a management consultant, speaker and workshop leader and continued to lecture at VCU in the Executive M.B.A. program and in the Center for Corporate Education.

Johnston published more than 300 academic and trade articles and two books, "Speaking of Work," and, "What Every Manager Needs to Know," (co-authored), as well as several recordings and videos.

Friends, colleagues and former students have raised \$30,000 to name a room in Johnston's honor at the new School of Business building, and former students Thomas and Vickie Sneed contributed \$120,000 for a scholarship in his name.

Christopher E. Desch, of Richmond, Va., Dec. 10, 2006. He was an adjunct professor at VCU's Massey Cancer Center.

Jack Haberstroh, of Rancho Bernardo, Calif., Jan. 13, 2007. He taught for 12 years at VCU's School of Mass Communications.

Carroll Hormachea, of Richmond, Va., June 7, 2007. A professor of sociology, he founded the police-education program at Richmond Professional Institute, now VCU's Department of Criminal Justice.

Wayne Johnston, B.S., Ph.D., of Richmond, Va., Feb. 3, 2007, at age 61. He taught at the VCU School of Social Work and spent 31 years working for the Virginia Department of Social Services.

Bruce Koplin, B.S., M.F.A., of Richmond, Va., Jan. 27, 2007, at age 67. He was a professor of art history at VCU's School of the Arts, including serving as chair of the art history department for 12 years. He also served as the director of the Anderson Gallery.

Paul D. Minton, Ph.D., of Roanoke, Va., July 10, 2007, at age 88. He served as dean of the School of Arts and Sciences from 1972 to 1980. He remained at VCU for several more years as the school's director of the Institute of Statistics and professor of mathematical sciences.

Dr. M. Leigh Rooke, of Richmond, Va., Feb. 17, 2007, at age 91. She taught in the graduate program of the Department of Hospital and Health Administration and served as director of the health care management undergraduate program for long-term care, before retiring from VCU after two decades.

Charlotte Schrieberg, M.S.W., of Richmond, Va., May 10, 2007, at age 89. She was a professor in the School of Social Work at VCU, from which she retired at the age of 85.

Elver Eugene Stickley, of Richmond, Va., May 25, 2007, at age 92. A retired professor of radiology, he also was an amateur musician who played the bassoon.

John Van de Walle, of Midlothian, Va., Dec. 2, 2006, at age 63. He was a professor emeritus at VCU, and in 2000, he earned VCU's Charles P. Ruch Award for Excellence in Teaching.

## Friends of VCU

Sidney Bailey, of Basel, Switzerland, Oct. 28, 2006.

Ronald Cain, of Richmond, Va., Dec. 4, 2006, at age 80. He joined J.C. Wheat and Co. in 1954, rising to executive vice president, a member of the board and managing director. He served two terms as vice president of the Richmond Jaycees and two terms as president of the Richmond area unit of the American Cancer Society.

Leroy Goldberg, of West Palm Beach, Fla., Aug. 13, 2006. Formerly of Richmond, Va., he was the CEO of Goldberg Co. and also served as president of the Better Business Bureau in Richmond.

Raymond Gordon Jr., of Richmond, Va., Aug. 23, 2006. He spent his career with the YMCA and was the director of Camp Richmond Wyanoke, executive director of the central branch of YMCA and director of the Peninsula YMCA.

Shirley Merhige, of Washington, D.C., Jan. 9, 2007.

## Abbreviation key

Alumni are identified by degree, year and college or school. Asterisk (\*) denotes members of the VCU Alumni Association.

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| H&S | College of Humanities and Sciences                        |
| A   | School of the Arts  |
| AHP | School of Allied Health Professions                       |
| B   | School of Business  |
| D   | School of Dentistry                                       |
| E   | School of Education                                       |
| En  | School of Engineering                                     |
| GPA | L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs |
| GS  | Graduate School   |
| LS  | VCU Life Sciences   |
| M   | School of Medicine  |
| MC  | School of Mass Communications                             |
| N   | School of Nursing   |
| P   | School of Pharmacy  |
| SW  | School of Social Work                                     |
| WS  | School of World Studies                                   |

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| A.S.     | Associate Degree                                 |
| Cert.    | Certificate                                      |
| B.F.A.   | Bachelor of Fine Arts                            |
| B.G.S.   | Bachelor of General Studies                      |
| B.I.S.   | Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies            |
| B.M.     | Bachelor of Music                                |
| B.M.E.   | Bachelor of Music Education                      |
| B.S.     | Bachelor of Science                              |
| B.S.W.   | Bachelor of Social Work                          |
| D.D.S.   | Doctor of Dental Surgery                         |
| D.P.A.   | Doctor of Public Administration                  |
| D.P.T.   | Doctor of Physical Therapy                       |
| M.A.     | Master of Arts                                   |
| M.Acc.   | Master of Accountancy                            |
| M.A.E.   | Master of Art Education                          |
| M.B.A.   | Master of Business Administration                |
| M.Bin.   | Master of Bioinformatics                         |
| M.D.     | Doctor of Medicine                               |
| M.Ed.    | Master of Education                              |
| M.Env.   | Master of Environmental Studies                  |
| M.F.A.   | Master of Fine Arts                              |
| M.H.A.   | Master of Health Administration                  |
| M.I.S.   | Master of Interdisciplinary Studies              |
| M.M.     | Master of Music                                  |
| M.M.E.   | Master of Music Education                        |
| M.P.A.   | Master of Public Administration                  |
| M.P.H.   | Master of Public Health                          |
| M.P.S.   | Master of Pharmaceutical Sciences                |
| M.S.     | Master of Science                                |
| M.S.D.   | Master of Science in Dentistry                   |
| M.S.H.A. | Master of Science in Health Administration       |
| M.S.N.A. | Master of Science in Nurse Anesthesia            |
| M.S.O.T. | Master of Science in Occupational Therapy        |
| M.S.W.   | Master of Social Work                            |
| M.T.     | Master of Teaching                               |
| M.Tax.   | Master of Taxation                               |
| M.U.R.P. | Master of Urban and Regional Planning            |
| O.T.D.   | Post-professional Occupational Therapy Doctorate |
| Pharm.D. | Doctor of Pharmacy                               |
| Ph.D.    | Doctor of Philosophy                             |

## Mass communications school stays

# techno savvy

By Erin Egan

Remember a time before cell phones, iPods, PDAs, texting, blogs and podcasts? When electronic equipment was not obsolete the second you bought it? When the most advanced device you had to master was the electric typewriter?

**Mark Raper** (B.S. '82/MC) recalls his journalism classes at Virginia Commonwealth University when "everything was handwritten or pecked on a typewriter," he says.

Computers existed but they were the size of entertainment centers and definitely not portable. "There was no such thing as a laptop," Raper says.

Today, Raper is the chairman and CEO of CRT/tanaka, one of the largest independent public relations firms in the U.S. He can't imagine doing business with technology from the 1980s. "You have to have the mobile phone [and] the laptop to stay in constant touch with your clients," Raper says. "That's the way businesses run now."

Bonnie Davis prepares students for this high-tech world as a professor in VCU's School of Mass Communications. Her students are a quick studies when it comes to the latest gizmos. "They grew up using computers," Davis says, "so they are really on top of accessing information in a timely manner."

Being techno savvy is no substitute for good old-fashioned reporting, however. Text messages and e-mail have their place, but "you're going to lose a lot in e-mail conversations — facial expressions, gestures, eye contact," Davis says. "Those can't be conveyed through technology."

There's no doubt that technology has changed the way news is presented. It's also changed how Davis teaches. Instead of assigning one longer print piece as a final project (as she did in her early teaching days), Davis' students put together a multimedia package, including print with a video, blog or podcast attached.

Taking the idea of integrating communication vehicles a step further, in 2006 VCU launched its Ph.D. program in Media, Art, and Text. "There are so many technologies in our world now," says Catherine Ingrassia, Ph.D., associate dean for academic affairs. "It was important to start looking at the cultural significance of them. It was important to start thinking more broadly about the world of communications."

**Matt Mattox** (M.S. '05/MC), a strategic planner with The Martin Agency, would agree. The computer programs and electronic gadgets he used in his graduate studies at VCU's Adcenter are the same that he uses every day on the job. "[The technology] prepares you for the real world," he says. "The tools are not going to disappear."

More than likely they'll continue to improve. Take the medium of broadcast journalism, which has exploded in the past 20 years.

"In the early days of news we had 15-minute newscasts," says **Aaron Gilchrist** (B.S. '03/MC), an anchor for NBC-12 in Richmond, Va., as well as an adjunct professor at VCU. "Now we have 24-hour news cycles. The technology allows new pictures and stories to be gathered constantly for people to consume all day."

The equipment his VCU students use is top of the line. Even though he graduated just four years ago, Gilchrist remembers shooting on clunky tape and lugging around heavy cameras to report stories. Not anymore. His students shoot digitally on small, lightweight cameras and are whizzes with the latest tools of the trade. That quick learning curve comes in handy, especially when the instructor needs an occasional tutorial. "They explain things to me and I'm grateful for that," Gilchrist says.

### Advancing technology

#### 1970s

typewriter  
radio  
journals  
passing notes  
evening news

#### 2007

laptop  
podcast  
blogs  
texting  
24-hour news

Erin Egan is a contributing writer for *Shafer Court Connections*.



1970s



2007

Resources available in the VCU School of Mass Communications continue to progress so that students can sharpen their skills and experience an expanded view of the world.

[then] In the mid-1970s, the School of Mass Communications was just four years old. Students studying journalism used the school's high-tech television studio to hone their broadcasting skills.

[now] Today, VCU mass communications students have a unique opportunity to see how other countries relay their news. The International Newsroom, located in the James Branch Cabell Library, features 12 color TV monitors with access to more than 60 channels from around the world. The newsroom includes stations such as Israel TV Channel 1, Jordan Television and Thai TV Global Network.

# Datebook

Mark your calendars for these Virginia Commonwealth University and VCU Alumni Association events. For more alumni activities, go to [www.vcu-mcvalumni.org](http://www.vcu-mcvalumni.org) or [www.vcu-aaac.org](http://www.vcu-aaac.org), or visit <http://events.vcu.edu> for campus happenings.

## OCTOBER

- Oct. 12  
**VCUAA Emeriti Directors Reception\***  
Scott House  
(804) 828-2856
- VCUAA Legacy Event/Freshman Scholars BBQ\*  
University Student Commons  
(804) 828-2856
- Oct. 20  
**Genworth Children's Advantage Classic**  
featuring James Taylor, Andre Agassi  
and Steffi Graf  
Stuart C. Siegel Center  
(804) 828-7267
- Oct. 22-26  
**Friends of the Library Annual Book Sale**  
James Branch Cabell Library  
(804) 828-1105

## NOVEMBER

- Nov. 9-17  
**Theatre VCU – "Dracula"**  
W.E. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts  
(804) 828-6026
- Nov. 17  
**The Baltimore Consort**  
W.E. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts  
(804) 828-6776

## DECEMBER

- Dec. 8  
**Commencement Breakfast\***  
University Student Commons  
(804) 828-2586
- Winter Commencement**  
Stuart C. Siegel Center  
(804) 828-1917

## JANUARY

- Jan. 4-17  
**Alumni Campus Abroad Trip: South Africa\***  
(804) 828-2586
- Jan. 18 – March 2  
**"Gord Peteran: Furniture Meets its Maker"**  
**"Familiar Faces"**  
Anderson Gallery  
(804) 828-1522

- Jan. 25-26  
**VCU Dance – Miguel Gutierrez & The Powerful People**  
Grace Street Theater  
(804) 828-2020

## FEBRUARY

- Black History Month at VCU**  
Various events/locations  
(804) 828-6672
- Feb. 2  
**Roberto Diaz, viola**  
W.E. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts  
(804) 828-6776
- Feb. 6  
**VCUAA Board of Directors Meeting\***  
University Student Commons  
(804) 828-2856
- Feb. 15-24  
**Theatre VCU – "For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf"**  
W.E. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts  
(804) 828-6026

## MARCH

- March 1  
**Pascal Rogé, piano**  
W.E. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts  
(804) 828-6776
- March 20  
**23rd Annual Brown-Lyons Lecture:**  
**Jack Spiro, Ph.D.**  
W.E. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts  
(804) 828-1165 or (804) 828-1163
- March 27-29  
**VCU Dance Now**  
Grace Street Theater  
(804) 828-2020
- Experiencing Villa-Lobos**  
**VCU Department of Music**  
Various events/locations  
(804) 828-1166
- March 28-30  
**15th Annual French Film Festival**  
Byrd Theatre  
(804) 827-3456

## APRIL

- TBD  
**VCU Staff Senate Walk-a-thon for Student Scholarships**  
Location TBD  
(804) 827-0857
- April 5  
**The Beaux Arts Trio**  
W.E. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts  
(804) 828-6776
- April 11-26  
**"Twelfth Night"**  
W.E. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts  
(804) 828-6026
- April 13  
**VCU Intercultural Festival**  
University Student Commons  
(804) 828-6672
- April 25-27  
**Reunion Weekend\***  
Richmond Professional Institute Reunion  
African-American Alumni Council Reunion  
Various events/locations  
(804) 828-2586

## MAY

- May 17  
**Commencement Breakfast\***  
Location TBD  
(804) 828-2856
- Spring Commencement**  
Richmond Coliseum  
(804) 828-1917
- May 22  
**VCUAA Board of Directors Meeting\***  
University Student Commons  
(804) 828-2856

\* VCUAA events





CIRCA

## Student housing: 1970s

Until 1968, when Rhoads Hall opened, students at the then-Richmond Professional Institute lived in either apartment buildings or former residences that were remodeled for their use. VCU's first modern dorm — named for Webster S. Rhoads Jr., a Richmond businessman and a member of the RPI Board of Visitors from 1962 until 1967 — initially housed only women in its 366 rooms on 18 floors.



# It's a great time to be a member!



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